



Office of the Attorney General Milestones

August 2021



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A Message from
Illinois Attorney General
Kwame Raoul

It has been an honor to serve the people of the State of Illinois as the 42nd Attorney General for the past two years. Our office has consistently advocated on behalf of Illinois and its people by protecting consumers, defending our rights, and collaborating with the law enforcement community to help keep our communities and children safe.

The responsibilities of the Attorney General, to defend and advocate for the state and its people, were brought into sharp focus with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Despite the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, our staff immediately moved into action to adapt our operations to meet the needs of Illinois residents, while also keeping our employees safe. Our attorneys and staff answered thousands of calls from consumers about price gouging and from workers concerned about COVID-19 safety practices in their workplaces. Our attorneys also fought to uphold the Governor's actions to keep Illinois residents safe in accordance with public health guidance.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has created unique challenges to serving as the Attorney General, our office continues to provide ongoing support and services to the people and communities across Illinois. This report reflects the hard work and dedication of the attorneys and staff of the Attorney General's office. I could not be more thankful for their dedication and service, and I look forward to continuing to build on our accomplishments.

Kwame Raoul
Attorney General

About the Office of the Illinois Attorney General

The Attorney General is the state's chief legal officer and is responsible for protecting the public interest of the state and its people.

The job of the Attorney General is to:

- Advocate on behalf of all of the people of Illinois;
- Work with members of the General Assembly to create new laws;
- Represent state government in litigation; and
- Litigate to ensure state and federal laws are followed and respected.

The Attorney General provides services that cover a broad range of issues, reaching every corner of Illinois.

As an advocate for state government and the public interest, Attorney General Raoul works to protect consumers, help crime victims, advocate for veterans, service members and their families, preserve the environment, ensure an open and honest government, and defend the rights of the residents of Illinois.

Attorney General Raoul safeguards our communities by convening state and local law enforcement agencies to work together and better serve our state.



Biography of Attorney General Kwame Raoul

Attorney General Kwame Raoul was sworn in as the 42nd Attorney General of Illinois in January 2019. Born in Chicago to Haitian immigrants, Raoul brings a lifetime of legal and policy experience, advocacy and public service to the Office of the Attorney General. As the state's chief legal and law enforcement officer, Attorney General Raoul has demonstrated a commitment to protecting Illinois residents by leading the "people's law firm." He has initiated efforts to provide aid to those impacted by violence, defend the rights of workers, and protect consumers from scams, especially throughout the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Attorney General Raoul has worked to reduce the long-lasting effects of violence and provide support to survivors of violent crime and their families.



Inauguration Speech January 14, 2019.

Attorney General Raoul has improved Illinois' Crime Victims Compensation Program by ensuring that the process is trauma-informed, implementing efficiencies in the application process, and increasing awareness of the program through outreach to communities across the state that are affected by violence. He also increased the funding for grants under the Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program, which provides financial support to government and nonprofit social service agencies throughout Illinois that offer services to victims and witnesses of violent crime.

In addition to these community safety efforts, Raoul has focused on enhancing collaboration between the Attorney General's office and federal and local law enforcement agencies. Raoul has fostered law enforcement partnerships to engage in joint enforcement efforts to keep firearms out of the hands of dangerous individuals, protect children from online predators, participate in threat assessment trainings for law enforcement and school personnel, and uphold the integrity of public offices across the state. He has also taken a leadership role in addressing the unique, multijurisdictional issues that have arisen through the COVID-19 pandemic through the creation of a task force made up of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to combat widespread Unemployment Insurance fraud.



Attorney General Raoul observes the National Anthem opening the 2019 Battle of the Badges charity basketball game.

Attorney General Raoul also has prioritized partnerships with attorneys general and advocacy groups across the country to strengthen enforcement actions that have implications beyond any one state's borders. Raoul's office has engaged in multi-state efforts to defend access to quality health care for all, to protect our natural resources from rollbacks of environmental protections, and to fight for immigration policies that do not separate children from their families.

As Attorney General, Raoul has been a leader in defending and protecting the rights of working people in Illinois. Raoul spearheaded legislation that formalized a Worker Protection Unit in the Office of the Attorney General and granted the office clear authority to enforce violations of worker protection laws. Raoul's office responded to thousands of complaints from Illinois workers about workplace safety throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Raoul leads a statewide task force composed of state officials and prosecutors to improve collaboration between government entities as they work to prevent discrimination, wage theft, misclassification, and other unfair and unlawful practices affecting Illinois workers.

The Attorney General's office has long been a leader in consumer protection efforts, and Attorney General Raoul has continued to champion those efforts to protect Illinois consumers. The Attorney General has partnered with federal, state and local law enforcement entities in order to shut down and stop bad actors who prey on Illinois residents. He has prioritized efforts to hold accountable industries that manufacture and sell products that threaten consumers' health and safety, such as opioids and e-cigarettes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Attorney General Raoul mobilized his office to handle calls from consumers who were concerned about price gouging and other COVID-19-related scams.



Attorney General Raoul and Senator Dick Durbin call for legislative changes to fight robocalls at a 2019 news conference.

Before he was elected as Attorney General in November 2018, Attorney General Raoul spent 14 years serving as a state senator representing the 13th legislative district. As a senator, Raoul led negotiations and sponsored many significant measures that became law, including those to abolish the death penalty, to require mandatory background checks on private transfers of guns, as well as law enforcement and criminal justice reform, workers' compensation reform, and some of the strongest voting rights protections in the nation. Attorney General Raoul began his legal career as a prosecutor in the Cook County state's attorney's office, handling matters at the trial and appellate levels in the criminal, civil, and juvenile divisions. He subsequently served as a senior staff attorney for the City Colleges of Chicago, primarily handling labor and employment matters. Raoul was also a partner at two national law firms, serving in health care and labor and employment practice groups.

Attorney General Raoul is a graduate of DePaul University and earned his law degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law. He is married to Dr. Lisa Moore, and the couple are the parents of four children, Che, Mizan, John, and Madison.

By the Numbers 2019-2020:

In 2019 and 2020 the Office of the Attorney General:



Received over 39,331 consumer complaints.



Collected over \$1.8 billion on behalf of the State of Illinois.



Awarded over \$13 million in grants to victim service providers in Illinois.



Mediated 811 cases and saved Illinois consumers over \$7.5 million through mediation successfully conducted by the Health Care Bureau.



Reviewed over 9,000 bills filed in the General Assembly and analyzed almost 900 of those pieces of legislation.



Received over 19,000 case referrals from state entities for representation.



Enforced the law for the over 38,000 registered charities.



Collected over \$4.8 million in civil penalties from entities that violated laws protecting our environment.



Examined 596 terabytes of digital evidence to keep children safe from online predators.

Overview of 2019 and 2020: Fighting against COVID-19 and Fighting for Racial Justice

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic became a part of the reality of our daily lives. No one could have imagined that so many lives would be lost. COVID-19 caused us all to pivot and think about how we keep our families safe and maintain a sense of calm during the chaos.

In the midst of this new reality of navigating the world with a transmissible and potentially deadly disease spreading throughout the state, the Office of the Attorney General galvanized its resources to step in and protect the people of Illinois.

Representing the State

The Office of the Attorney General has worked tirelessly to keep in place the public health mitigation efforts that the Governor implemented through executive action. The office successfully litigated to uphold the Governor's executive orders in 24 instances where parties were seeking to immediately stop an executive order. In other cases, the office's appeals team was able to uphold the Governor's authority to execute mitigation efforts aimed at keeping Illinois safe and slowing the transmission of COVID-19. The defense of these important public health measures includes a significant amount of legal work and involved travel to different parts of the state, as well as adapting to online hearings in some cases. Our team accomplished this while the office adapted its own practices to keep our attorneys and staff safe.



The office successfully litigated the Governor's executive orders in 24 instances where parties were seeking immediately to stop pandemic response measures.

Protecting Consumers and Workers

Since the beginning of the pandemic, people all over Illinois have been looking for assistance to help them cope with the fallout of the COVID-19. The Consumer Protection team immediately found ways to convert its workflows and redirect calls so employees could serve the public and safely work from home. During the early days of the pandemic, the office fielded thousands of calls about COVID-19 price gouging from consumers. The attorneys and staff of the office were successfully able to mediate these issues directly with businesses across Illinois.



Calls from consumers were always steady before COVID-19, and spiked during the pandemic. The office staff worked remotely with a limited team onsite. Front desk staff fields calls from constituents.



The Workplace Rights Bureau maintained a hotline dedicated to receiving calls about COVID-19-related safety concerns in the workplace.

Besides adapting our existing operations for the pandemic, the office also created new programs and resources to help serve the public during this unprecedented time. In mid-March, the office's Workplace Rights Bureau began receiving complaints from workers about employers failing to comply with the Governor's executive orders and Illinois safety guidelines related to COVID-19. The complaints described how non-essential employers were forcing workers to continue reporting for work as normal and without adequate safety protections, social distancing, or personal protective equipment.

The office responded to the rising number of pandemic-related workplace complaints by dedicating a team of attorneys and staff to respond to these complaints. The Workplace Rights Bureau maintained a hotline dedicated to receiving calls about COVID-19-related safety concerns in the workplace. It was not long before the office began receiving hundreds of complaints each week. **By April 2020, the team staffing the Workplace Rights hotline had grown to a total of 32 AAGs from multiple bureaus and divisions within the office.** Additional support staff, including investigators and bilingual paralegals, were assigned to assist with the Workplace Rights Bureau hotline. They interviewed individuals who alleged employers were failing to abide by the requirements in the Governor's executive orders and related safety guidance.



Since March 2020, the office has contacted hundreds of employers to achieve their compliance with the Governor's executive orders and safety guidance related to the pandemic. The office has gathered information from workers to present to employers to ensure they know about and adhere to their obligations to ensure a safe workplace. As employers across the state struggled with

the ever-evolving challenge of operating in a pandemic, these discussions educated businesses that needed guidance on how to protect their workforce from the spread of COVID-19.

Fighting against the Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the socio-economic disparities in the United States. As part of its ongoing work and response to the pandemic, the Office of the Attorney General sought relief for those who suffered unforeseen financial and other hardships during this unprecedented time. For Illinois workers, COVID-19 magnified pre-existing challenges in workplace protections and created new challenges, especially for temporary workers and workers in low wage positions. With the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Occupational Safety and Health Administration announcing in March 2020 that it would not enforce guidance for employers

issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Workplace Rights Bureau stepped in and partnered with Illinois state agencies to provide both guidance and assistance to workers across the state. While some continued to work during the pandemic, many families suffered severe interruptions to their incomes, causing them to fall behind on their bills. **The Public Utilities Bureau successfully advocated for a utility disconnection moratorium that protected hundreds of thousands of people facing financial hardship brought on by the pandemic from losing their heat and electricity.** The moratorium also included financial assistance for utility consumers who are struggling to pay their bills.

For those who became infected with COVID-19 or who needed to access healthcare for their ongoing medical needs, disparities in our healthcare system proved to be significant barriers to needed health services, with unfortunately dire consequences for many. At one point in the pandemic, statistics from the Cook County Medical Examiners Office and the Chicago Department of Public Health showed that 68 percent of Chicago's COVID-19 deaths involved African Americans, who are only approximately 30 percent of Chicago's total population, outpacing deaths from every other racial demographic. The causes of healthcare disparities are both systemic and complex. The office continues to examine the causes of these disparate healthcare outcomes, especially as they relate to minority communities.

Working with Other Governmental Entities

Besides working within the Office of the Attorney General to develop an action plan to help the public navigate some of the complications of the COVID-19 pandemic, the office engaged with other stakeholders to share our knowledge and expertise to better serve the public during this unprecedented time. To address complaints of identity theft related to unemployment insurance benefits fraud and enhance collaboration amongst law enforcement, Attorney General Raoul partnered with the FBI to establish the Attorney General's Task Force on Insurance Benefits Fraud. In addition to the Illinois Attorney General's office and the FBI, the task force is composed of the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the Illinois State Police, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the Illinois Department of Revenue, the Internal Revenue Service, as well as the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, the Illinois Sheriff's Association, and the Illinois State's Attorneys Association.

The office also teamed up with federal authorities by partnering with the U.S. Attorneys from the Northern, Central, and Southern Districts of Illinois to investigate and pursue price gougers and other COVID-19 scammers who were taking advantage of the unprecedented public health situation. On the local level, members of our Public Interest and Consumer Divisions engaged with the Illinois State's Attorney Association to serve as a resource to these entities during the pandemic on topics like price gouging and obtaining



Attorney General Raoul partnered with the FBI to establish the Attorney General's Task Force on Insurance Benefits Fraud. [View Press Release](#)

quarantine and isolation orders on behalf of their local health departments.

Multi-State Efforts

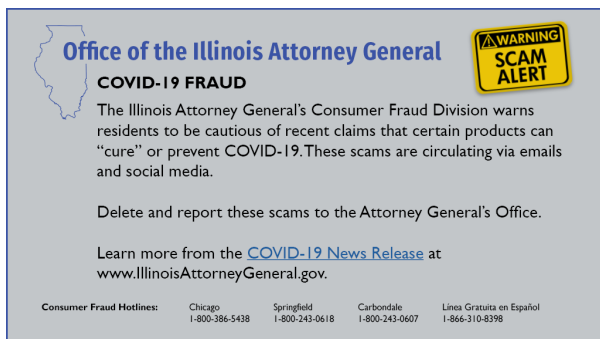
The response to the COVID-19 pandemic by the office also involved working with partners outside of the state to make sure our framework of laws functions to protect the people of Illinois. The Attorney General's Office joined with 13 attorneys general to submit a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency denouncing the EPA's March 26, 2020 memorandum that announced a nationwide policy limiting the civil enforcement of federal environmental laws during the COVID-19 crisis. The coalition expressed concern with the EPA's policy significantly curtailing enforcement of the nation's bedrock environmental and public health laws, as this lack of enforcement meant that fence line communities – often underserved and minority communities – could be exposed to harmful pollution without adequate warning. The policy also ignores the connection between air pollution and cardiovascular and respiratory conditions, which may increase risk of serious harms – including premature death – for individuals who contract the COVID-19 virus.

Attorney General Raoul led a bipartisan coalition of 31 states in filing an amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit to support

states' authority to enforce price gouging regulations to protect consumers during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Raoul and the coalition are urging the appellate court to overturn the district court's decision in a lawsuit filed by the Online Merchants Guild in the state of Kentucky. The court entered a preliminary injunction preventing Kentucky from enforcing price gouging regulations against retailers selling products on Amazon and from

issuing administrative subpoenas to those retailers. In the brief, Attorney General Raoul and the coalition state that national and local emergencies, such as the pandemic, create significant shortages for essential items. State price gouging laws are essential to ensure that goods can be fairly allocated among residents, and to prevent bad actors from profiting off residents by charging excessively high prices for goods that are scarce.

The office also worked with other states to secure the safety of the 2020 General Election, which presented unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Through a multi-state coalition of 13 attorneys general, the Office was able to ensure the ability of people in Illinois to vote by mail during the COVID-19 pandemic by halting changes to the U.S. Postal Service delivery process.**



The graphic is a rectangular box with a light blue background. On the left is a white outline of the state of Illinois. To its right, the text "Office of the Illinois Attorney General" is written in blue, followed by "COVID-19 FRAUD" in bold black. Below this, a paragraph in black text warns residents about recent claims of "cure" products. To the right of the text is a yellow "WARNING SCAM ALERT" sign. Further down, it instructs to delete and report scams to the Attorney General's Office and provides a link to a COVID-19 News Release. At the bottom, it lists consumer fraud hotlines for Chicago, Springfield, Carbondale, and a Spanish-language line.

Office of the Illinois Attorney General
COVID-19 FRAUD
The Illinois Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Division warns residents to be cautious of recent claims that certain products can "cure" or prevent COVID-19. These scams are circulating via emails and social media.

Delete and report these scams to the Attorney General's Office.

Learn more from the [COVID-19 News Release](#) at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov.

Consumer Fraud Hotlines: Chicago 1-800-386-5438 Springfield 1-800-243-0618 Carbondale 1-800-243-0607 Lines Gratuitas en Español 1-866-310-8398

RACIAL JUSTICE AND FOSTERING DIVERSITY

The tragic death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 was a stark reminder of the pervasive and systemic inequities faced by African Americans and people of color in the United States. Immediately after this tragedy, Attorney General Raoul asked his senior staff to reflect on this tragedy and how they can utilize the work of the Office of the Attorney General to combat racial injustice. Attorney General Raoul also shared his personal experiences with encounters with police in a letter sent to all staff of the Office of the Attorney General and led an office-wide “Lunch and Learn” meeting about this issue with New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal.



AG Raoul joined AG Grewal of NJ for a Zoom webinar to discuss similarities and different approaches to ensuring justice.

Following this reflection on the status of policing and community trust in law enforcement, Attorney General Raoul took the lead in Illinois to find ways to improve systems of police accountability. Meaningful police reform means attacking the decades-old, systemic unconstitutional policing in communities around the country. At the federal level, Attorney General Raoul joined with 18 state attorneys general in a letter calling upon Congress to enact legislation granting state attorneys general statutory authority to investigate and resolve patterns and practices of unconstitutional policing by local police departments. This provision was included in the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020, which passed out of the U.S. House of Representatives, but failed to move in the Senate. **The office continues to work with fellow attorneys generals to advocate for this legislation in the 117th Congress.**

During the summer of 2020, Attorney General Raoul led discussions to reform the police certification and decertification process to better hold officers accountable for unlawful conduct, engaging with a wide variety of stakeholders representing community advocates and law enforcement. In crafting this complex piece of legislation, subject matter experts from across the office contributed their time and expertise to strengthen this proposal. This proposal was ultimately adopted into the Criminal Justice omnibus legislation that was initiated by the Legislative Black Caucus. This legislation was passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor as Public Act 101-0652.

The movement calling for racial justice in the summer of 2020 also highlighted the urgency and importance of other ongoing efforts of the Office of the Attorney General. The office oversees a consent decree designed to change the patterns and practices of the Chicago Police Department. The goal of the consent decree is to put in place reforms that govern police training and policies and to implement safe and constitutional policing practices.



Attorney General Raoul applauded Governor Pritzker for signing criminal justice law that improves police certification.
[View Press Release](#)

Attorney General Raoul recognizes that the same communities that disproportionately suffer from law enforcement abuse and misconduct also more heavily experience the trauma of normalized violence. This has led the Attorney General's attorneys and staff to take a more holistic approach to providing crime victims' services and taking a broader view of who is considered a victim in need of support and services from the state.



Staff join in the 2019 Twilight Parade at the Illinois State Fair.

Building a Diverse Office

One of the greatest strengths of Illinois is the diversity of its residents. As the “People’s Law Firm,” we have an unwavering commitment to reflect and promote that diversity, not simply as the employer of a dedicated and talented workforce, but also as a law enforcement agency tasked with ensuring equal protection of our laws. We must ensure that our actions reflect our values.

In furtherance of this mission, Attorney General Raoul prioritized increasing the diversity of the Office of the Attorney General, including the diversity of his leadership team, to better serve the people of Illinois. Attorney General Raoul’s office is led by its first African American female Chief of Staff. Of his senior staff, 18 percent serving in these roles are people of color and 54 percent are women. Attorney General Raoul has also recruited and promoted people of color and women to lead the various bureaus throughout the office.



Senior staff join in the cross-divisional Zoom meeting on violence prevention.

In addition to increasing the diversity of his leadership team, Attorney General Raoul has also created a series of initiatives designed to promote diversity throughout the office. Growing out of questions posed by office staff at a “Lunch and Learn” meeting, Attorney General Raoul has committed to instituting implicit bias training for the entire office and has taken steps to secure the resources for that training, to be completed by the end of 2021. Attorney General Raoul has also tasked his leadership team with creating affinity groups in the office by year end to provide support to staff and attorneys.

Additionally, Attorney General Raoul refocused the existing role of Director of Attorney Recruitment and Professional Development to include a focus on diversity. This change led to more expansive outreach to diverse bar association leaders to help in recruiting diverse candidates. The office also continues to participate in minority job fairs, such as the Cook County Bar Association Minority Hiring Fair. The office has been able to hire candidates

from the Cook County Bar Association Hiring Fair as paid law clerks prior to their bar passage results, providing them with an opportunity to train within the office prior to becoming Assistant Attorneys General once they are licensed to practice law in Illinois. Finally, Attorney General Raoul takes the opportunity to talk about his career with teens and younger children from diverse backgrounds, knowing that his example as an attorney of color can be an inspiration for those future generations of attorneys and public servants.



Youth from the Boys and Girls Club joined AG Raoul to learn about the office and careers in public service.

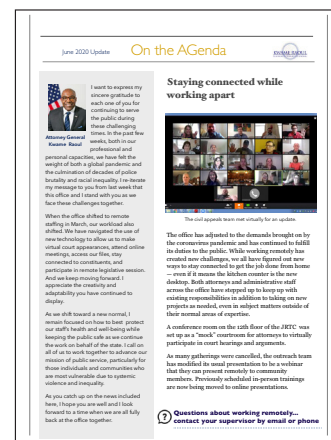
Building the “People’s Law Firm”

The Office of the Attorney General is the public law firm that works for and supports the people of Illinois and its government. As the leader of the office, Attorney General Raoul has taken steps to ensure that the “People’s Law Firm” is a strong organization positioned to serve its mission for many years to come.

Attorney General Raoul has instituted changes in office policy to stay competitive with other law firms and government legal jobs, as well as improve the “quality of work” for employees at the office. Maternity, Paternity, and Adoption leave for parents was increased from 4 weeks to 10 weeks. Accelerated by the necessity of the COVID-19 pandemic response, the office provided remote work access, adding another layer of work flexibility that promotes work/life balance.

Attorney General Raoul has taken steps to improve communication across the office to foster a sense of connection amongst employees, an effort which has become even more important with employees working remotely. The office began a series of virtual “Lunch and Learn” meetings for all staff and also encouraged these events within divisions and bureaus by facilitating access to online meeting technologies. The office also instituted a monthly newsletter, “On the AGenda,” which highlights the work of different divisions and bureaus, employee career anniversaries, and other important information for staff.

Attorney General Raoul has prioritized creating multi-division and multi-bureau working groups to break down barriers between different parts of the office and create opportunities for collaboration between the specialty focus areas in the office. One example of a successful working group is the Opioid Task Force, which includes attorneys from multiple divisions, such as Public Interest, Consumer, Criminal, and Government Representation, who come together to share their work involving the different facets of opioid crisis. Attorney General Raoul also has created an internal Gun Task Force to take a multi-disciplinary approach to combatting gun violence in the state.



In this Section:



Protecting Consumers

- Consumer Protection by the Numbers
- Consumer Fraud Efforts
- Robocalls
- Public Utilities
- Fighting for Student Borrowers
- Protecting Personal Information
- Protecting Law-Abiding Businesses
- Anti-Trust
- Building Better Charities

Jump To:

- Promoting Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
- Representing the State
- Advocacy in the Legislature
- Contact Information





Protecting Consumers

Attorney General Raoul works to protect Illinois consumers from fraud, deception, and unfair business practices. Through informal dispute resolution, enforcement actions, outreach and advocacy, the office protects the public from unscrupulous actors who prey upon Illinois residents. The work of the Consumer Fraud Division ensures that members of the public are protected when they enter consumer transactions ranging from car sales and home repairs to health care and student loans. The office also serves as an important resource and advocate for consumers who have issues with their gas, electric, and water utilities. The Consumer Fraud Division also partners with other states in multi-state actions to stop fraud efforts nationwide.

Consumer Protection by the Numbers:

In 2019 and 2020:



Student borrowers in Illinois benefited from \$20,100,145 in debt forgiveness and refunds achieved through litigation, investigation, and mediation.



Illinois consumers received \$69,248,397.60 in monetary restitution to consumers achieved through litigation and nearly \$8,822,297.38 through mediation in response to consumer complaints.



The Health Care Bureau successfully mediated 811 cases and saved Illinois consumers over \$7.5 million through mediation in response to their complaints.



Charitable Trust attorneys reached resolutions in litigation or advocacy matters resulting in approximately \$37,315,000 won on behalf of Illinois residents, businesses, or not-for-profits.



The Consumer Fraud Bureau received 39,331 complaints from consumers across Illinois.

CONSUMER FRAUD EFFORTS

Protecting Consumers From COVID-19-related Issues: COVID-19-related complaints topped the list of consumer complaints for 2020. Besides price-gouging issues that started early in the pandemic, throughout 2020, the Attorney General's office responded to a variety of consumer issues related to the pandemic. Attorney General Raoul obtained refunds for Illinois consumers who purchased tickets for events or travel that were



Our advocates are trained to respond to questions and concerns that are brought to the office.

canceled due to the pandemic. **The Attorney General also took several enforcement actions against retailers, home repair companies, and automobile dealers regarding deceptive advertisements related to the pandemic.** Additionally, the office entered into settlements with several automobile dealers and repossession companies that repossessed vehicles during the pandemic in violation of the Governor's executive order.

Consumer Alert Campaign on COVID-19 Scams and Schemes: Attorney General Raoul issued several alerts to the public about various COVID-19-related scams, including an alert warning against price gouging by Illinois businesses on items related to COVID-19 (March 17, 2020); an alert warning against price-gouging by online retailers (March 25, 2020); and an alert warning consumers about work-from-home and pyramid schemes (September 2020). These alerts increase public awareness about current scams so Illinois residents can avoid them. Also the alerts help the office deter fraudulent conduct by encouraging consumers to contact the office with relevant information.

Federal Charges for Price Gouging: As a result of a joint investigation by federal prosecutors, the FBI, and the Office of the Attorney General, the owner of a suburban Chicago medical supply company was charged with illegally price gouging customers seeking to purchase scarce N-95 masks amid the COVID-19 pandemic. A criminal information filed in October 2020 in U.S. District Court in Chicago by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois charged a Winnetka man with one count of violating the Defense Production Act of 1950. The charge is punishable by up to one year in federal prison. The public is reminded that the charge in the information is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Multi-state Partnerships to Tackle Price Gouging: The Attorney General's office led a bipartisan coalition of 31 states in filing an amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit to support states' authority to enforce price gouging regulations to protect consumers during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Raoul and the coalition are urging the appellate court to overturn the district court's decision in a lawsuit filed by the Online Merchants Guild in the state of Kentucky. The district court entered a preliminary injunction preventing Kentucky from enforcing price gouging regulations against retailers selling products on Amazon and from issuing administrative subpoenas to those retailers. In the brief, Raoul and the coalition state that national and local emergencies, such as the pandemic, create significant shortages for essential items. State price gouging laws are essential to ensuring that goods can be fairly allocated among residents, and to preventing bad actors from profiting off residents by charging excessively high prices for goods that are scarce.

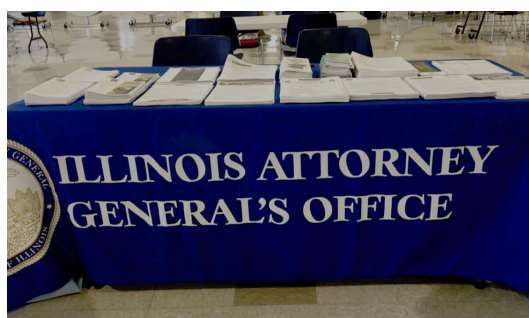
Auto Loans/Purchases: The Attorney General's office led a multi-state investigation into the subprime auto lending practices of Santander Consumer USA. **As a result, the office obtained approximately \$4.4 million in restitution for Illinois consumers harmed by the deceptive practices of this subprime auto lender and over \$45 million worth of defaulted auto loans forgiven.** Subprime auto lenders, like Santander issue loans to more vulnerable consumers at high interest rates. Subprime lenders are prohibited from collecting racial demographic data on their consumers, but communities of color are disproportionately impacted by these risky auto loans. Through its investigation, the office uncovered that Santander exposed borrowers to unnecessarily high levels of risk, significant backend fees, and high payment-to-income ratios and engaged in deceptive and misleading servicing practices. Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia joined the settlement forcing Santander to repay consumers and forgive defaulted loans, **resulting in a total of \$550 million in consumer relief to the states.**



Holding Apple Accountable for iPhone Battery Health and Performance: Attorney General Raoul, along with 33 states and the District of Columbia, obtained a \$113 million settlement with Apple, Inc. regarding Apple's 2016 decision to slow consumers' iPhone speeds to address unexpected shutdowns in some iPhones. Under the settlement, Apple paid \$3,422,294 to Illinois. In addition to the monetary payment, Apple must provide consumers with accurate information about iPhone battery health, performance, and power management. Apple must detail this important information in various forms on Apple's website, in update installation notes, and in the iPhone user interface itself. Apple also recently settled separate class action litigation related to the same conduct.

[Learn how to avoid auto fraud](#)

Under that settlement, Apple will pay up to \$500 million in consumer restitution.



The Attorney General sent investigators and community liaisons to emergency centers to alert residents of potential home repair fraud in flooded areas.

Preventing Home Repair Fraud Following Storms:

Following historic flooding in the spring of 2019, which resulted in a disaster declaration for 34 Illinois counties, Attorney General Raoul issued a statewide alert to residents about “storm chasers,” who are contractors that descend upon areas impacted by natural disasters to pressure residents into making quick and often expensive decisions about repairing their homes. Investigators from the office were also dispatched to affected counties to assist local law enforcement with potential bad actors.

ROBOCALLS

Improving Laws and Giving Law Enforcement Tools to End Robocalling:

Attorney General Raoul has been a consistent advocate for stopping the scourge of robocalls. As part of a coalition of 54 attorneys general, the Attorney General’s office signed a letter urging Congress to enact the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence (TRACED)

Act to enable states, federal regulators, and telecom providers to take steps to combat these illegal calls.

The TRACED Act was signed into law on December 30, 2019. The law requires voice service providers to participate in a call authentication framework to help block unwanted calls and creates an interagency working group to take additional actions to reduce robocalls and hold telemarketers and robocallers accountable.



Operation Call it Quits – Crackdown on Illegal Robocalls: In May 2019, Attorney General Raoul, in cooperation with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), joined in a major crackdown on illegal robocalls, which included 94 actions targeting operations around the country that are responsible for more than 1 billion calls pitching a variety of products and services, including credit card interest rate reduction services, money-making opportunities, and medical alert systems. These actions were part of “Operation Call it Quits” which is part of an ongoing nationwide effort to help stem the tide of pre-recorded telemarketing calls. Operation Call it Quits also provides information to help educate consumers about illegal robocalls. In addition, Raoul, along with other state attorneys general and the FTC, continue to promote the development of technology-based solutions to block robocalls and combat caller ID spoofing.

Lawsuit Against Illinois Robocallers: As part of the Operation Call it Quits efforts, the Attorney General's office filed a lawsuit against two companies, Glamour Services, LLC and Awe Struck, Inc., and their owners, alleging that since 2007, these entities have used robocalling and telemarketing to solicit home cleaning services. Many consumers who filed complaints with the office had received repeated, unsolicited calls despite having their phone numbers registered with the National Do Not Call Registry. According to the lawsuit, the consumers who asked to be removed from the calling list were ignored, and the calls continued.

This lawsuit resulted in an injunction against the defendants that prohibits them from engaging in, or owning or operating a business that:

- Makes telephone solicitations,
- Engages in telemarketing,
- Uses an autodialer or autodialer system,
- Makes or transmits telephone solicitations, and
- Uses telephonic recorded messages for the purpose of soliciting business.

The judgment also included \$20,000 in statutory damages and \$7,162.25 in actual damages both payable to consumers along with a \$10,000 penalty against the defendants.

Enlisting Telecom Companies in the Fight to Stop Robocalls: Attorney General Raoul joined with a bipartisan, public/private coalition of 51 attorneys general and 12 phone companies to institute a set of principles to fight illegal robocalls and make it easier for attorneys general to investigate and prosecute bad actors. Raoul and the coalition of attorneys general worked with telecom companies to investigate technological solutions that major voice service providers were designing, developing, and implementing to stop robocalls. **Based on these meetings, the coalition developed a set of eight principles the phone companies can implement that address the robocall problem in two main ways: prevention and enforcement.**

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The Public Utilities Bureau advocates on behalf of consumers before the Illinois Commerce Commission, courts, and the General Assembly to ensure that public utilities provide adequate services at fair rates. The bureau also offers a variety of resources to help consumers understand their rights and what programs and services are available to help them access important utility services.

Going After Deceptive Practices of Alternative Retail Energy Suppliers: The Office of the Attorney General recovered nearly \$9 million in 2019 from alternative retail energy suppliers who preyed upon Illinois consumer with deceptive and unfair marketing tactics, and continued seeking compensation for consumers in 2020 with several cases pending in Circuit Court and at the Illinois Commerce Commission. Alternative retail electricity and gas suppliers, also known as ARES and ARGs, are companies that seek to have consumers change their electric or gas supply from public utilities to private suppliers, often through deceptive means. Many consumers are deceived by these marketing practices, do not understand these contracts, and end up spending hundreds more for energy, without realizing they are paying substantially more than the supply rate charged by their public utility. Research by the Office of the Attorney General demonstrates that consumers often targeted for ARES contracts disproportionately reside in minority and low-income areas.



Consumer protection groups, community advocates joined Attorney General Raoul in a press conference explaining how unfair marketing practices harm utility customers.

SB 651 – Protecting Consumers from Overpaying on their Utility Bills:

In addition to pursuing unscrupulous alternative retail energy suppliers in court, the Office of the Attorney General successfully passed legislation that further protects consumers from the unlawful practices of these companies. Senate Bill 651, the Home Energy Affordability and Transparency or “HEAT” Act requires ARES companies to provide potential customers with price comparisons and other information they need to make an informed choice about selecting their energy provider. The bill also prohibits state subsidies provided to low-income utility users from

being used for expensive ARES contracts. Senate Bill 651 was sponsored by Senator Kimberly Lightford and Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth and signed into law by Governor Pritzker (Public Act 101-0590).

Protecting Consumers During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Attorney General’s Public Utilities Bureau took a leading role in securing consumer protections and bill assistance for consumers who were unable to afford essential utility service due to the economic and other disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Protections included an extended disconnection moratorium, 18-24 months to pay arrearages, elimination of certain deposits as well as more than \$45 million in bill assistance to avoid disconnection due to inability to pay.

Getting Relief for People’s Gas Consumers: In July 2019, the Attorney General’s Public Utilities Bureau secured \$7 million from Peoples Gas in bill credits, including \$3.5 million to assist its low-income customers. The settlement, entered into between Peoples Gas and the Attorney General’s

office, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC), and the Citizens Utility Board, is the result of the ICC's yearly review of how Peoples spends the funds received from the "Rider QIP." The Rider QIP is the surcharge that appears on customers' bills each month, which goes toward infrastructure improvements. The settlement also included \$7 million that was deducted from the investment base on which Peoples Gas earns a profit.

Protecting Roof-top Solar and Net Metering: The Attorney General's Public Utilities Bureau provided critical legal analysis to counter Ameren's effort to prematurely end net metering, a policy essential to the growth of the rooftop solar in the Ameren service area.

Ensuring ComEd and Ameren Pass Along their Tax Savings to Customers: In January 2020, Attorney General Raoul filed two requests with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) to rehear and reconsider its decisions that allow ComEd and Ameren to hold onto hundreds of millions of dollars in consumer refunds for a period of more than 35 years. The Attorney General's office advocated for ComEd to return \$385 million in excess tax dollars and Ameren return \$158 million in excess tax dollars to consumers over a five-year period rather than the proposed 38- and 35-year periods, respectively. The office's recommendation to the ICC would result in an additional \$62 million rate reduction for ComEd consumers and \$20 million for Ameren consumers each year for the next five years. The federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act reduced the federal corporate income tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent. As a result of the lower federal tax rates, ComEd and Ameren now have millions of dollars in excess tax money they collected from consumers. The office continues to advocate that these dollars should be returned in a timely manner to the consumers who paid the higher tax rates to ComEd and Ameren. This litigation is still pending.

FIGHTING FOR STUDENT BORROWERS

Student Loan Ombudsman: Attorney General Raoul has overseen the rollout of the state's first Student Loan Ombudsman, a position created by the Student Loan Servicing Rights Act, to provide a dedicated resource for student borrowers struggling with student loan payments. The ombudsman, an attorney with legal expertise in higher education, also engages in advocacy efforts to reinforce the rights of student borrowers. In June 2019, the student loan ombudsman testified before a congressional subcommittee on how student loan servicing has failed borrowers and enabled fraudsters to take advantage of students.



[View Brochure](#)

Addressing Deceptive Practices of For-Profit Educational Institutions:

The Attorney General's office has consistently advocated for loan forgiveness for students defrauded by shuttered for-profit institutions. The office has been successful in efforts to recover money for affected students and continues to work for full relief for all student borrowers defrauded by unscrupulous actors.

ITT Tech Debt Relief: Attorney General Raoul obtained nearly \$14 million in debt cancellation for former students of failed for-profit school ITT-Tech through two settlements with private lenders. In September 2020, the office announced a settlement agreement that included more than \$9.4 million in student loan debt relief. The relief is part of a \$330 million national settlement reached by the office, 47 other attorneys general and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) with PEAKS Trust, which operated a private loan program for ITT Tech (ITT) students.

In June 2019, the Office of the Attorney General announced that nearly 500 former Illinois ITT Tech students will receive more than \$4.5 million in relief after a settlement with the school's private lender. The office obtained this relief for Illinois students as part of a multi-state settlement with 44 attorneys general in an action against Student CU Connect, a company that provided loans to students who attended ITT Tech. **In total, more than 18,000 former students of the failed, for-profit ITT Tech will receive more than \$168 million in student loan debt relief.**

ITT Tech had pressured students to take out loans through this company, but students did not realize these loans were not like federal loans, which become due six months after graduation. When students were unable to meet the repayment deadline, ITT Tech coerced them into accepting high-interest loans. Students were not informed of the true temporary credit repayment cost until after the credit was converted to a loan.

Illinois Institute of Art Debt Relief: Attorney General Raoul obtained millions of dollars in federal and private student loan cancellations for over 1,000 Illinois students who were defrauded by the Illinois Institute of Art. In January 2018, the school lost accreditation, but did not inform students or prospective students for six months. Following the announcement, the school closed and was put into receivership. The Attorney General's office obtained evidence of the fraud and submitted a group discharge application to the U.S. Department of Education in June 2019. The application requested loan cancellation for the period of the fraud and an extension of the closed school discharge period to the date the school lost accreditation. The U.S. Department of Education discharged the requested loans in November 2019, amounting to over \$10 million in relief between Illinois and Colorado students, who were also affected. The Department also extended the



Attorney General Raoul obtained millions of dollars in federal and private student loan cancellations for more than 1,000 Illinois students who were defrauded by the Illinois Institute of Art.

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closed school discharge period as requested by Attorney General Raoul in February 2020. This extension allows any student in attendance at the time of the closure to have all federal student loans used to attend the school discharged, provided they were not transferred to another school. If the student does not apply for discharge or transfer the credits within three years, the loans will be automatically discharged.

In March 2020, Attorney General Kwame Raoul also entered into a settlement with the former operators of the Illinois Institute of Art that discharged over \$2,150,000 in institutional student loans and refunded over \$37,000 in payments on those loans. The settlement discharged all loans made by the school to pay for the quarters in which the school defrauded students and also refunded payments made on those loans. The settlement also discharged loans made by the school to pay for any other quarter, provided the student was attending the Illinois Institute of Art after the loss of accreditation and did not graduate.

COVID-19 and Student Borrowers: The office developed a Guide for Student Borrowers on options and protections for their student loan debt during the economic downturn and public health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The office continues to monitor changes related to COVID-19 that impact student borrowers and updates the guidance accordingly.

Legislation Protecting Student Borrowers: In 2020, Attorney General Raoul spearheaded two pieces of legislation to both protect student borrowers from predatory loan practices and also ensure that they are able to make informed decisions about taking out student loans. House Bill 5320, sponsored by Representative Michael Zalewski, and Senate Bill 3571, sponsored by Senator Omar Aquino, will regulate Student Loan Debt Relief Companies (SLDRs), which are entities that provide “debt relief services” to students, but routinely use high-pressure sales tactics and charge high, upfront fees for their services, all when students may utilize the free debt relief services offered by the U.S. Department of Education.

The Office of the Attorney General receives many complaints from students about the deceptive practices of SLDRs and has filed nine lawsuits against these entities. SLDRs are not currently subject to any licensure requirement in Illinois. HB 5320/SB 3571 amend the Debt Settlement Act to expressly regulate SLDRs by including these entities and the services they provide under the regulatory authority of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Additionally, the legislation requires SLDRs to make specific disclosures in their advertising and communications with consumers.

House Bill 5361, sponsored by Representative Lamont Robinson, and Senate Bill 3844, sponsored by former Senator Pat McGuire are aimed at promoting awareness among students of their federal loan eligibility and equipping borrowers with meaningful information so that they can make educated decisions about how to responsibly finance their education. The legislation creates the “Know Before You Owe” Private Loan Education Act of 2020, which will prohibit financial aid offices at institutions of higher learning from directing borrowers to take out private loans if the student borrower has remaining federal loan eligibility. It also requires private lenders to seek a certification from the school confirming that the student borrower does not have any further federal loan eligibility.

Because of the abbreviated legislative session due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these bills did not advance in the 101st General Assembly. The office refiled these legislative initiatives in the 102nd General Assembly. Both bills passed with bipartisan support and await consideration by the Governor.

PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION

Unemployment Insurance Benefits Fraud Task Force: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of the Attorney General has received and investigated complaints related to unemployment insurance benefits fraud by scammers who use personal information taken as a part of data breaches to apply for unemployment benefits. To more effectively address these complaints, Attorney General Raoul partnered with the FBI to establish the Attorney General’s Task Force on Insurance Benefits Fraud. The aim of the task force is to enhance collaboration among state and federal agencies



investigating and prosecuting forms of unemployment benefits fraud. In addition to the Illinois Attorney General’s office and the FBI, the task force is composed of the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the Illinois State Police, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the Illinois Department of Revenue, the Internal Revenue Service, as well as the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, the Sheriff’s Association, and the Illinois State’s Attorneys Association.

Unemployment Scams Alerts: Early in the pandemic, Attorney General Raoul issued a statewide consumer alert about these Unemployment Insurance Fraud schemes and how consumers can monitor their credit and prevent future misuses of personal information.

PROTECTING LAW-ABIDING BUSINESSES

Working to help consumers also involves protecting businesses who play by the rules. The office also enforces laws that level the playing field for law-abiding businesses.

Workers' Compensation Insurance Fraud: Attorney General Raoul partnered with the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General in securing a guilty plea from a business owner who defrauded the Postal Service of nearly \$2 million by lying about obtaining workers' compensation insurance for his employees. The business owner had contracted with the U.S. Postal Service to transport mail between Postal Service facilities in western Illinois and the Peoria area. Under the contracts, the Postal Service paid directly or reimbursed the owner for workers' compensation insurances. An investigation by the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission (IWCC) determined the business did not purchase workers' compensation insurance for its employees; however, the business owner submitted expense statements to the Postal Service seeking reimbursements that included workers' compensation premiums. The business owner allegedly was paid more than \$1.9 million for insurance the company never purchased. Ultimately, the business owner pleaded guilty in Stark County Circuit Court to a Class 1 felony of theft by deception of over \$100,000 and was sentenced to six years in prison.

Instruction: Agencies
Government agencies
SSA, 6401 Security Blvd, Baltimore

I. What type of benefit are you receiving, did you receive?

WORKERS' COMPENSATION:

- ☐ Workers' Compensation - State (including occupational disease payments)
- ☐ Black Lung Benefits
- ☐ Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation
- ☐ Federal Employees' Compensation (FECA) - workers' compensation for Federal employees

For each benefit checked above, enter the claim

TYPE OF BENEFIT	CLAIM NUMBER
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Regulating Franchises: The Franchise Bureau in the Office of the Attorney General registers and monitors companies who seek to sell franchises in Illinois. The goal of this bureau and the Franchise Disclosure Act is to provide presale disclosures and protection for prospective franchisees. The bureau provides information on the Franchise Disclosure Act and its rules applicable to the offering of franchises and on business and financial histories of franchisors.

ANTI-TRUST

Attorney General Raoul's Antitrust Bureau protects the public interest by enforcing federal and state antitrust laws to ensure consumers, businesses, and the State of Illinois benefit from free and competitive markets. The following are examples of some of the Antitrust Bureau's major enforcement activities and accomplishments from over the past two years.

Merger of Sprint and T-Mobile: Attorney General Raoul achieved significant protections for low-income subscribers, extended internet access to under-served communities, and obtained protections for employees through a settlement with T-Mobile and Sprint following

antitrust litigation over the proposed merger of these two companies, which represent half of the four national mobile network operators. The settlement was obtained as part of a lawsuit challenging the merger of T-Mobile and Sprint filed by a coalition of 16 attorneys general including Attorney General Raoul. The suit alleged that the merger would harm mobile subscribers nationwide by reducing access to affordable, reliable wireless service, significantly impacting lower-income and minority communities. As part of the settlement, the merged companies agreed to: make low-cost plans available for at least five years, including a plan offering 2 GB of high-speed data at \$15 per month and 5 GB of high speed data at \$25 per month; offer 100 GB of no-cost broadband internet service per year for five years; provide up to 2 million free mobile Wi-Fi hotspot devices to qualifying low-income households not currently connected to broadband nationwide, as well as the option to purchase select Wi-Fi enabled tablets at the company's cost for each qualifying household; and commit to increasing diversity and inclusion initiatives among other commitments.



Seeking Justice for Drug Price Inflation by “Pharma Bro” and Others:

In April 2020, the Attorney General's office joined in a multi-state complaint charging violations of federal and state antitrust law by Vyera Pharmaceuticals, its parent Phoenixus AG, and two of its former CEOs, Martin Shkreli (commonly known as the “Pharma Bro”) and Kevin Mulleady. The complaint alleged that defendants illegally inflated and manipulated the

price of Daraprim. In August 2015, defendants raised the price of Daraprim, a lifesaving drug for people with compromised immune systems, by more than 4,000% overnight, from \$17.50 to \$750 per pill. Allegedly, defendants engaged in illegal conduct to prevent other companies from manufacturing and marketing a generic equivalent to Daraprim, by preventing generic drug companies from obtaining samples of Daraprim and purchasing the active ingredient necessary for the manufacture of Daraprim. Such actions allegedly restrained trade and maintained the inflated price. The defendants' illegally obtained profits are estimated to be in the tens of millions of dollars. The office is seeking disgorgement of the illegally obtained profits.

Illegal Google Monopoly: Attorney General Kwame Raoul joined a bipartisan coalition of 38 attorneys general in December 2020 in filing a lawsuit against Google LLC, alleging that the company illegally maintains its monopoly power over general search engine services and related advertising markets through a series of anticompetitive, exclusionary contracts and conduct. The lawsuit alleges that Google has deprived

consumers of competition that could lead to greater choice, innovation, and better privacy protections. Furthermore, Raoul and the coalition allege that Google has exploited its market position to accumulate and leverage massive amounts of data to the detriment of consumers. The lawsuit contends that more competition in the affected markets would benefit consumers through greater privacy protections and improved search results and would benefit businesses through better-quality and lower priced advertising. In the lawsuit, Raoul and the coalition seek to stop Google's illegal conduct and restore a competitive marketplace by unwinding any advantages that Google has gained through its anticompetitive conduct, including by enjoining certain conduct and divesting assets as appropriate.

Facebook Litigation: In December 2020, Attorney General Raoul joined 45 states, the District of Columbia, and the Territory of Guam in suing Facebook for unlawfully maintaining a monopoly in personal social networking services and for unlawfully acquiring Instagram and WhatsApp. As a result of Facebook's conduct, the complaint alleges consumers have been harmed by having fewer personal social networking options, including less ability to control the privacy of their data. The lawsuit seeks to have Facebook's conduct declared unlawful, to enjoin Facebook from committing future antitrust violations, to prevent Facebook from making certain acquisitions without advance notice to states and the federal government, and for the court to order divestitures of Facebook companies or business lines as necessary to restore competition.

BUILDING BETTER CHARITIES

The Attorney General's office ensures that non-profit organizations are functioning within the boundaries of the law by enforcing the Charitable Trust Act and the Solicitation of Charities Act. Charitable trusts and organizations that solicit funds are required to register and file annual financial reports with the office. These annual reports, which are processed by the office's Charitable Trust Bureau, require charitable trustees and organizations to remain accountable for their use of charitable assets. Potential donors then have access to important information about a charity, including income, expenditures, program details, and administration costs, before deciding to donate. **Currently there are more than 38,900 charities registered in Illinois. In 2019 and 2020, there were 1,699 new registrations in Illinois.**

Defending Illinois Donors from Bogus Charities: The Office of the Attorney General successfully took action against a charity based in Lombard called the Veterans Christian Network (VCN) and its founders, who lied to the public and were using charitable contributions for their



The Office of the Attorney General successfully took action against a charity based in Lombard called the Veterans Christian Network (VCN) and its founders, [View Press Release](#)

own benefit rather than for the benefit of veterans. In August 2019, the office was able to shut down VCN and permanently prevent the founders from engaging in future charitable activities in Illinois. A \$28,000 monetary judgment also was entered against the defendants for the amount they collected from the public but for which they never accounted.

Protecting a Donor's Intent to Benefit: In September 2019, the office obtained an order approving a settlement in a Winnebago County probate case ensuring that three charitable beneficiaries of a trust (the Salvation Army, Bethesda Covenant Church of Rockford, and Crusader Clinic of Rockford) would receive an immediate pay-out of \$4,850,000, which was the same amount they would have received under the trust documents despite years of litigation. In addition, under the settlement, the office ensured that the charities received their bequests immediately instead of having to wait until after the death of the settlor's living children as originally set forth in the trust documents.

Shutting Down Questionable Fundraising: In November 2020, the Attorney General's office obtained an agreed final order and judgment in litigation against Live Out Loud Charity (LOLC) and its president. The office brought suit alleging that LOLC and its president engaged in unregistered charitable fundraising and misrepresentations in solicitations and that the president could not account for \$30,000 of LOLC funds expended for questionable uses. The agreed final order and judgment permanently closed LOLC down, banned LOLC's president from operating any charity in Illinois for five years, and imposed a \$30,000 judgment against the president.

Protecting Charitable Funds from Theft: In November 2020, the Attorney General's office obtained a permanent injunction against the former executive director of the Children's Heart Foundation, who had **pled guilty in federal court to stealing \$770,000 from the foundation** while serving as its executive director. An agreed forfeiture judgment for \$770K was entered against the executive director in the federal case; however, the executive director was not enjoined from acting as a fiduciary of charitable assets. The office sought to enforce a provision of Illinois charity law and obtained a state court order enjoining former executive director from acting as a charitable fiduciary in Illinois ever again.



Charities and COVID-19: In addition to the Charitable Trust Bureau's regular litigation caseload in 2020, the Attorney General's office participated in court actions involving charities in financial distress due to COVID-19 who sought to modify or remove donor restrictions on their endowments as a means of accessing funds to continue operations. **The office worked to**

find appropriate ways to help the charities obtain the relief sought while protecting donor intent. In one case involving a downstate college, the office assisted in determining that the restrictions on certain endowment funds, collectively worth \$19.8 million, could be modified. An order was entered freeing up those monies so that they can now be used to further donor intent to help preserve the college's programs and keep students enrolled.

Educational Outreach Initiatives: In addition to registering charities and litigation work, the Office of the Attorney General Charitable Trust Bureau also engages in educational efforts with attorneys and non-profit and community leaders. These efforts encourage and facilitate compliance with Illinois' charitable trust laws, which in turn serve as a benefit to all donors who choose to support Illinois charities.

In this Section:



Government Transparency & Accountability

- Public Access Counselor
- Public Integrity
- Ethics and Transparency

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
- Representing the State
- Advocacy in the Legislature
- Contact Information



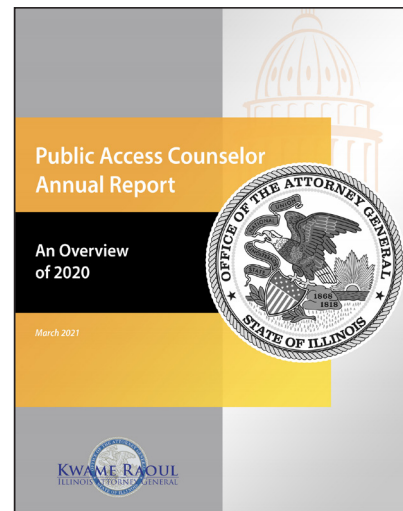
Government Transparency & Accountability

Ensuring the openness and transparency of our governmental bodies is key to maintaining accountability to the public. Attorney General Raoul demonstrates a commitment to these principles through the office's Public Access Counselor, Public Integrity Bureau, and through its own compliance with these ethics laws.

PUBLIC ACCESS COUNSELOR

Through the Public Access Counselor Bureau, the Office of the Attorney General helps the public and organizations access records from state and local governmental entities. The PAC also resolves disputes involving the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and participates in educational events so that the public better understands these important laws.

In 2019 and 2020, the PAC received more than 7,000 requests for assistance from members of the public and media seeking access to records or public meetings. Also, in 2019, the PAC issued 13 binding opinions and closed almost 4,000 cases that had been outstanding.



[View the PAC Annual Report](#)

Providing Guidance on FOIA and OMA during the

COVID-19 Pandemic: As public bodies across the state took steps to curb the spread of COVID-19, the PAC and the Public Access Bureau developed guidance on how to comply with the provisions of the OMA and FOIA despite disruptions to normal operations and limitations on in-person gatherings. This document, **“Guidance to Public Bodies on the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act during the COVID-19 Pandemic,”** was developed based on the current status of the law and, where applicable, the Governor’s Executive Orders issued as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Educating the Public and Government Officials about FOIA and

OMA: Besides addressing FOIA and OMA issues that come to the PAC for resolution, the Public Access Bureau engages in education and outreach efforts to improve compliance with and awareness of these laws for public bodies. **In 2019 and 2020, the PAC was able to reach more than 3000 government officials, members of law enforcement, and members of the media and public in trainings about their responsibilities under the state’s transparency laws.** In 2019, the Public Access Bureau was able to increase the amount of its trainings by 25 percent. In 2020, the Public Access Bureau

transitioned its in-person trainings to a web-based platform to facilitate “virtual” participation.

PUBLIC INTEGRITY

When the public trust has been violated, that trust must be restored to preserve the integrity of our public officials and governmental entities. The Office of the Attorney General maintains a Public Integrity Bureau, which serves the important function of investigating and possibly prosecuting cases it receives from referrals from governmental entities or from one of the 102 State’s Attorneys in Illinois. The office also receives referrals from the



Office of the Executive Inspector General (OEIG) seeking enforcement for violations of the State Employees and Officials Ethics Act, including state employee participation in prohibited political activities, gift-ban violations, sexual harassment, obstructing an OEIG investigation, and violations of the revolving door provisions that govern the jobs state employees may accept following state employment.

As part of our efforts to expand capacity and bandwidth in this area, Attorney General Raoul built partnerships with the FBI and other state and local law enforcement agencies handling public corruption investigations. These partnerships allow the office to leverage our collective intelligence in the public corruption spaces and cross-train our current investigators.

The office and the Public Integrity Bureau also investigate and prosecute fraud against numerous public programs, ensuring that our units of government can operate within the full scope of their authority to fulfill their mission to the people of Illinois. The office also handles “whistleblower” suits filed pursuant to the Illinois False Claims Act. This important law allows for whistleblowers to identify when fraud has been committed against government entities.

Obstruction of Justice by Illinois Gaming Board Employee: In conjunction with the investigation conducted by the Illinois State Police, in October 2020, the Office of the Attorney General filed charges against an employee of the Illinois Gaming Board who lied about an accident involving his state-issued vehicle. The defendant pleaded not guilty to the charges filed by the office, obstruction of justice and disorderly conduct, Class 4 felonies punishable by one to three years in prison. The charges stem from the allegations that while off-duty from his job, the Illinois Gaming Board employee was involved in a one-car collision that damaged his state-issued vehicle but reported to police that the state vehicle was side-swiped while it was parked near his residence. The employee ultimately admitted

to allegedly driving the vehicle while off-duty and striking a median on I-190. The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

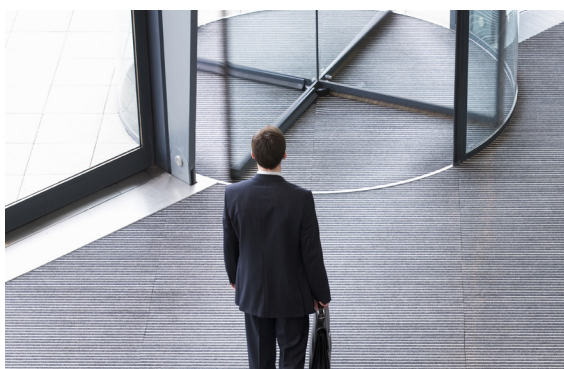
Misuse of Resources by County Officials: The Office of the Attorney General secured a grand jury indictment in Winnebago County for multiple felony charges committed by the Winnebago County Coroner and his wife. The charges stemmed from the alleged stealing of government funds, forgery and official misconduct. The Winnebago County Coroner was charged with multiple felony charges related to the alleged misuse of his government credit cards, amounting to 37 felony counts, including two counts of theft, which carry a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison; 12 counts of forgery, which carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison; and 23 counts of official misconduct, which also carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison. His wife also faces seven felony counts, including four counts of theft, which carry a maximum sentence of up to seven years in prison; and three counts of unlawful use of a credit card, which carry a maximum sentence of three years in prison. The case was investigated by the Illinois State Police. The public is reminded that the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Fraud Against Public Housing Applicants: In January 2020, the Office of the Attorney General filed charges against a Cook County man for allegedly soliciting bribes from applicants to the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA) Housing Choice Voucher Program. These charges include forgery, a Class 3 felony; theft by deception of between \$500 and \$10,000, a Class 3 felony; wire fraud, a Class 3 felony; and bribery, a Class 2 felony. The charges alleged that between October 2018 and 2019, the defendant used his CHA credentials to solicit bribes from individuals applying to be placed on CHA's waiting list for housing. The Chicago Housing Authority, Office of the Inspector General opened an investigation after the CHA received more than 50 applications submitted under the same circumstances. Individuals allegedly paid between \$1,800 and \$2,500, and it is estimated that the defendant allegedly collected more than \$116,000 in bribes. The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Illinois False Claims Act: The Attorney General's office handles "whistleblower" claims by private citizens called "qui tam relators" under the Illinois False Claims Act. This important law provides a means by which the qui tam relators can call out fraud against the government, which keeps government contractors accountable to providing the goods and services that they are contractually obligated to provide to the State of Illinois and other governmental entities.

United States ex rel. Hood v. LexisNexis Risk Solutions, Inc.: In July 2019, the office helped negotiate an approximately \$5.8 million multistate settlement in this qui tam false claim case. The relator alleged Lexis violated the terms of its contracts with hundreds of Illinois law-enforcement agencies by selling their automobile crash reports without compensation. **Illinois recovered approximately \$1.3 million in the settlement.**

United States ex rel. Glenn v. Cisco Systems, Inc.: Also in July 2019, the office helped negotiate a \$6 million multistate settlement in this qui tam False Claims Act case. The relator alleged that Cisco knew about vulnerabilities in its securities software but failed to disclose them to government purchasers for several years. The states settled their claims for \$6 million, and the case was dismissed on July 31, 2019. **Illinois recovered approximately \$382,000 in the settlement.**



Violation of Revolving Door Prohibition: The State Officials and Employees Ethics Act prevents certain state employees from accepting positions following their time in state employment with companies or entities that did business with the state. This law ensures that state employees operate with integrity during the time of their state employment and do not provide preferential treatment to state contractors with the hope of securing their next job.

In 2020, the office was able to successfully secure the largest fine for a revolving door violation ever levied against a former state employee. In June 2020, a former employee of the Department of Information and Technology (DoIT) was fined more than \$190,000 for accepting a position with a vendor that had a contract with DoIT that the former employee had approved. The former employee sought and received approval to accept a position with an “unrestricted” employer. The former employee accepted that job but at the same time, was retained as a “consultant” by the “restricted” vendor that had the contract with DoIT, and he eventually became a full time employee of that vendor. The former employee failed to notify OEIG that he had received two offers of employment from the restricted employer. The Executive Ethics Commission found that the employee committed two “failure to notify” breaches and two substantive breaches of the Revolving Door provisions of the Ethics Act.

ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

The Office of the Attorney General also maintains its own commitment to ethics and transparency through its Inspector General and its internal FOIA Office. In addition, the Office of the Attorney General advocates before the

Illinois General Assembly in support of ethics and transparency.

Executive Inspector General, Office of the Attorney General: Pursuant to the State Employees and Officials Ethics Act, the Office of the Attorney General has an Inspector General charged with ensuring that the office and its employees conform with all ethics requirements set forth in state law and in office policy. The office along with the Inspector General provides an annual ethics training for all employees and encourages employees to proactively reach out to the Inspector General with questions about ethics or concerns. **The Inspector General and her staff operate a call line, email account and otherwise takes and investigates complaints from employees and the public regarding alleged unethical conduct by Attorney General's office employees and vendors to the Attorney General's office.**

Joint Commission on Ethics and Lobbying Reform: Representatives of the Office of the Attorney General served on a body convened by the Illinois General Assembly to examine governmental ethics and lobbying practices in Illinois. Serving on the commission on behalf of Attorney General were the Executive Inspector General Office for the Office of the Attorney General, who is a former federal prosecutor, and the Chief of the Public Integrity Bureau, who served 30 years as prosecutor with the Cook County State's Attorney Office.

As members of the Commission, the representatives from the office submitted recommendations to:

- Expand the Statewide Jury Act to better empower the Attorney General to investigate and prosecute crimes related to public integrity.
- Reform the Legislative Inspector General process to provide him or her with greater authority and independence to investigate potential ethics violations.
- Prohibit elected or appointed officials from lobbying while in office.
- Require the disclosure of consultants who assist in influencing specific outcomes in the legislature.
- Prohibit elected officials from becoming lobbyists or consultants within one year of leaving office.
- Improve access to information regarding potential conflicts of interest.

In addition, staff from the Attorney General's office testified before the

Commission about the compatibility of serving concurrently in different governmental offices, the role of the office in Ethics Act cases and the authority of the office to pursue public corruption cases under the Statewide Grand Jury Act.

Office of the Attorney General Freedom of Information Office: As a public body, the Office of the Attorney General is subject to the provisions of FOIA and OMA for the public meetings it holds. In 2019, the Attorney General's FOIA Office responded to 975 FOIA requests, and in 2020, the FOIA Office responded to 990 FOIA requests.

Constituent Services: The Office of the Attorney General's Constituent Services Bureau maintains accountability to the public by handling questions about the office and requests for more information about the office's services. **In 2020, Constituent Services handled more than 9,400 emails and pieces of mail on a wide array of issues in addition to receiving hundreds of phone calls per month.** Constituent Services staff seeks input from across the office in responding to constituent issues. When the public contacts the office on matters that are not within the office's purview, Constituent Services staff make all efforts to connect every constituent with the appropriate entity that can address their issue.

Community Outreach: The Office of the Attorney General maintains a team of community outreach specialists who are trained to give presentations on many different topics areas involving the work of the office. These outreach specialists are multilingual, allowing them to interact with specific communities in Illinois, such as the Polish and Spanish-speaking communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has allowed the office's outreach team to rethink how to use technology in order to create "virtual" events. The Outreach Team even used an old-fashioned technology, a "drive-in" event, to present before a senior center in Pekin.



Community Liaison Marsha Griffin informs Pekin seniors about identity theft in a "drive-in" Lunch and Learn from the safety of their cars in October 2020.

In this Section:



Safeguarding our Children

- Protecting Children From Online Child Predators
- Keeping Kids Safe
- Ending Youth Vaping
- Child Support Enforcement

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
- Representing the State
- Advocacy in the Legislature
- Contact Information

Safeguarding Our Children





Safeguarding Our Children

Through the work of several divisions and bureaus, the Attorney General's office works to protect children throughout Illinois. From investigating internet predators and teaching kids how to stay safe online to stopping the scourge of teen vaping and ensuring that caregivers have the resources necessary to provide for their families, Attorney General Raoul is committed to creating an environment for children that allows them to grow and flourish.

Safeguarding Our Children by the Numbers:

From January 2019 to December 2020:



629 Child Exploitation Search Warrants Served



596 Terabytes of Digital Evidence Examined



21,549 Students, Teachers and Parents Trained in Online Safety



1752 Law Enforcement Personnel Trained

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ONLINE CHILD PREDATORS

The Attorney General's High Tech Crimes Bureau is a multi-disciplinary team consisting of prosecutors, investigators, computer forensic analysts and internet safety specialists who work together to protect children from online predators. The Illinois Attorney General's office runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, a collaboration of more than 275 law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies that collaborate to investigate and prosecute technology-facilitated crimes against children.

During 2020, the ICAC Task Force received 5,184 CyberTipline reports from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). NCMEC serves as the national clearinghouse for the public and electronic service providers to report online child sexual exploitation. The significant increase in reports of child pornography could be attributed to multiple factors. While most reports involved adults abusing children, the task force also saw an increase in reports from Snapchat and Instagram involving youths sharing minors' self-produced content. Partnerships with the Illinois State Police and local law enforcement agencies through the ICAC Task Force are critical in apprehending offenders throughout the state. Since 2018, the ICAC Task Force has collaborated with the Illinois State Police by holding training classes and partnering to apprehend individuals who seek to exploit children and have handled 225 cases. The task force also has helped the Illinois State Police train more than 165 personnel to date.



Law enforcement investigators from across the state participate in the Office of the Attorney General's ongoing training on using technology to protect children from online predators.

Partnering with Local Law Enforcement to Stop Child Pornography: The ICAC team partners with local law enforcement to apprehend and charge the most active offenders who download and trade child pornography online. **In 2019 and 2020, the ICAC team led and assisted with 200 arrests of alleged offenders all over Illinois, including arrests in Lake, McHenry, Kane, Fayette, and Vermillion Counties.**

Missouri Man Sentenced for Crimes Against Children in Illinois: In December 2020, in a case prosecuted by the office's High Tech Crimes Bureau in conjunction with the Fayette County State's

Attorney, a Missouri man was sentenced to 13 years in prison after the man crossed state lines attempting to meet up with a minor. A Fayette County Circuit Court judge sentenced the man to 13 years in prison after being convicted on October 1 of one count of traveling to meet a minor, a Class 3 felony; two counts of child pornography, Class 3 felonies; and one count of grooming, a Class 4 felony. The man must register as a sexual predator.

Investigation and Prosecution of Child Porn Trafficker: The Office of the Attorney General assisted with both the investigation and prosecution of a central Illinois man who trafficked in extremely violent child pornography. **The man was found guilty and sentenced to 10 years in prison.**

Teaching Kids, Parents, Guardians, and Teachers how to Stay Safe

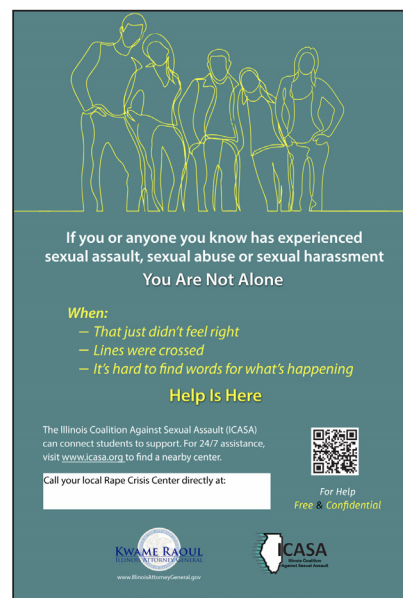
Online: The Office of the Attorney General through the ICAC Task Force and affiliates provided internet safety presentations across the state to teach kids how to stay safe online and helped their parents, guardians and teachers learn how to prevent kids from falling victim to online forms of abuse. In 2019, more than 13,000 parents, educators and youth attended trainings held by the office. **In 2020, more than 8,000 students, parents and teachers participated in training**, which were transitioned to virtual formats to ensure people received education about these important topics.

Highlighting Safer Internet Day: Attorney General Raoul has promoted the recognition of “Safer Internet Day,” which is a day designated each February to create awareness about safe online habits and to identify signs of online grooming. The Office of the Attorney General provides guidance to students and educators that are geared toward each year’s specific theme for Safer Internet Day.

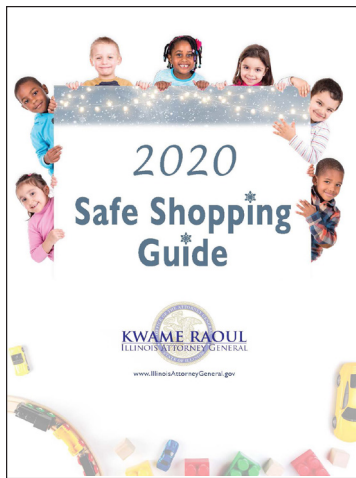
KEEPING KIDS SAFE

Public Awareness Campaign about Sexual Assault: The office partnered with the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ICASA) to deliver materials to public and private Illinois schools to help ensure that students know where they can turn for support if they have experienced sexual harassment, abuse, or assault. Building on that public education campaign, in November 2019, staff and attorneys from the office presented before a meeting of Illinois public school administrators on sexual violence in middle and high schools.

Threat Assessment Training: Attorney General Raoul partnered with the United States Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Safe 2 Help and the Illinois School and Safety Program to provide trainings on targeted school violence to educators, faith leaders, school mental health servicers and specialists, social workers and other personnel involved in risk detection and management. This partnership kicked off in 2020 and future trainings will continue to be held in 2021.



The “You Are Not Alone” campaign posters were created by the office and distributed to school districts across the state. [Sexual Assault, Sexual Abuse, Sexual Harassment in Schools](#)



[Safe Shopping Guide.pdf](#)

Safe Shopping Guide for Parents and Caregivers: Attorney General Raoul once again published a “Safe Shopping Guide,” which contains color photos and descriptions of recalled children’s products, including toys, furniture, and clothes. Attorney General Raoul promotes the Safe Shopping Guide at the start of the holiday shopping season in conjunction with Lurie Children’s Hospital and Illinois PIRG. This guide is available on the office’s website.

ENDING YOUTH VAPING

Vaping among young people in Illinois has risen at an alarming rate, with e-cigarette use by Illinois high school students now exceeding the rate at which Illinois adults smoke traditional cigarettes. In 2019, one in five Illinois high schoolers reported using an electronic vapor product within the past thirty days. **Unfortunately, in 2019 more than 200 cases of vaping-related illness and at least five vaping-related deaths in the state were reported, mostly among adolescents and young adults.**

Holding Vaping Manufacturers Accountable for Marketing Practices:

In December 2019, Attorney General Raoul filed suit against JUUL Labs, the nation’s largest manufacturer of e-cigarettes, alleging that JUUL



Medical experts and consumer protection advocates joined AG Raoul in a news conference announcing a lawsuit against JUUL, the nation’s largest e-cigarette labs in December 2019.

intentionally marketed its harmful nicotine products to minors. The lawsuit seeks to permanently enjoin JUUL from engaging in unfair and deceptive practices and hold JUUL accountable for its role in the youth e-cigarette epidemic, including by seeking civil penalties of \$50,000 per deceptive or unfair act or practice and an additional \$50,000 for each act or practice committed with the intent to defraud. In 2020, the office also filed a lawsuit against another California-based e-cigarette manufacturer, Juice Man, alleging that this company also marketed its products to attract minors. Litigation on these two matters is ongoing.

Consumer Alert on Dangers of Vaping: In August 2019, Attorney General Raoul issued a statewide consumer alert, warning Illinoisans – especially young people – not to use vaping products because of safety concerns.

Advocacy for Legislative Changes to Address the Dangers of Vaping: Attorney General Raoul has developed comprehensive legislation intended to address the vaping crisis in Illinois. Senate Bill 3699, sponsored by Senator

Julie Morrison, addresses many regulatory aspects of vaping, including restrictions on packaging and advertising, mandated safety warnings, prohibitions on the sale of certain dangerous additives, requiring any person or business shipping electronic cigarettes to be licensed by the Illinois Department of Revenue, and for those shippers to take steps to ensure that the purchaser of electronic cigarettes is at least 21 years old. This bill did not advance in 2020 because of the shortened legislative session due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was re-filed in 2021 and successfully passed out of the legislature with bi-partisan support.

In addition, in 2019, Attorney General Raoul testified before the Illinois House Mental Health Committee, urging lawmakers to ban flavored tobacco and vaping products that are especially appealing to young people. In 2020, Attorney General Raoul also submitted a letter to the City of Chicago Committee on Health and Human Relations, in support of the then-proposed Chicago ordinance banning the sale of flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, within Chicago. **The ordinance was passed and went into effect in fall 2020.**

Urging the Federal Government and Agencies to Address Vaping:

Besides working on state policies and laws on vaping, Attorney General Raoul has urged federal regulators to take broader steps to address youth vaping. In May 2019, as a part of a coalition of seven attorneys general, Attorney General Raoul filed comments urging the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to take stronger action to address the scourge of e-cigarette use among youth. The coalition urged the FDA to prioritize enforcement actions against all flavored e-cigarettes, including menthol, and mint; begin enforcement sooner than its proposed date; and ban the online sale of e-cigarettes. These comments by the coalition were issued in response to draft guidance published by the FDA explaining its proposed changes to the compliance policies for certain tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, and describing how the FDA intends to prioritize its enforcement resources with regard to the marketing of those products. The FDA subsequently released its finalized guidance in January 2020, announcing its prioritization of enforcement against flavored, cartridge-based e-cigarettes, excluding tobacco and menthol flavors.

In February 2020, Attorney General Raoul led a bipartisan coalition of 27 attorneys general to again urge the FDA to strengthen its enforcement priorities. The coalition encouraged the FDA to expand its guidance to include menthol and non-cartridge products in its enforcement priorities, citing the increased popularity of other products, such as disposable e-cigarettes, among youth users.

Warning the Public of the Dangers of Tobacco: Attorney General Raoul co-led a coalition of 25 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief supporting



In 2019 and 2020, the Child Support Enforcement Division received 26,919 case referrals and collected a total of \$587,484,557 in child support for custodial parents on behalf of Illinois children.

federal regulations requiring “graphic image” warning labels, which consist of color images that depict the dangers of smoking, on cigarette packages.

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

The Child Support Enforcement Division helps children get the financial support they need when it is not received from one or both parents. To accomplish this, the Office of the Attorney General works closely with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to carry out critical steps in the child support process. These steps include locating parents and assets, establishing paternity, establishing and modifying child support orders, monitoring and taking action to help parents comply with child support orders, and educating and assisting parents and the public. Enforcement services are available even if a parent lives in another state or country. The work of the attorneys and staff of the office’s Child Support Enforcement Division has a direct impact on the physical, emotional, and financial well-being of children because securing these resources allows caregivers to provide the necessary support for those young people under their care.

Child Support Enforcement Actions: In 2019 and 2020, the Child Support Enforcement Division received 26,919 case referrals and collected a total of \$587,484,557 in child support for custodial parents on behalf of Illinois children. These enforcement actions were filed by the division’s Assistant Attorneys General who cover child support court calls in 92 of Illinois’ 102 counties.

Educating the Public and Government Partners about Child Support

Issues: Besides filing enforcement actions in courts across Illinois to obtain the child support resources families need to survive, the Child Support Enforcement Division also works with parents, government partners, and the community to educate the public by providing information on the work of the division and other important child support issues. In 2019, members

of the Child Support Enforcement Division staffed the Attorney General’s resource tent at the Illinois and DuQuoin State Fairs, providing important information to attendees of these events about establishing child support for parents, modifying existing child support, as well as how to access other related resources. The division’s attorneys also held brown-bag lunch informational sessions with members of DCFS to address how victims of domestic violence may best receive information on child support enforcement services through HFS and the Office of the Attorney General.



Office staff worked from the state fairs to inform the public about important programs and services

These efforts are also being extended into domestic violence courtrooms in partnership with various State's Attorneys offices.

Illinois Child Support Advisory Committee: Attorneys from the Child Support Enforcement Division serve on the Board of Directors for the Illinois Child Support Advisory Committee. This committee conducts periodic reviews of the state's child support guidelines as required by the federal Family Support Act of 1988 and provides feedback and assistance in developing child support legislation.

In this Section:

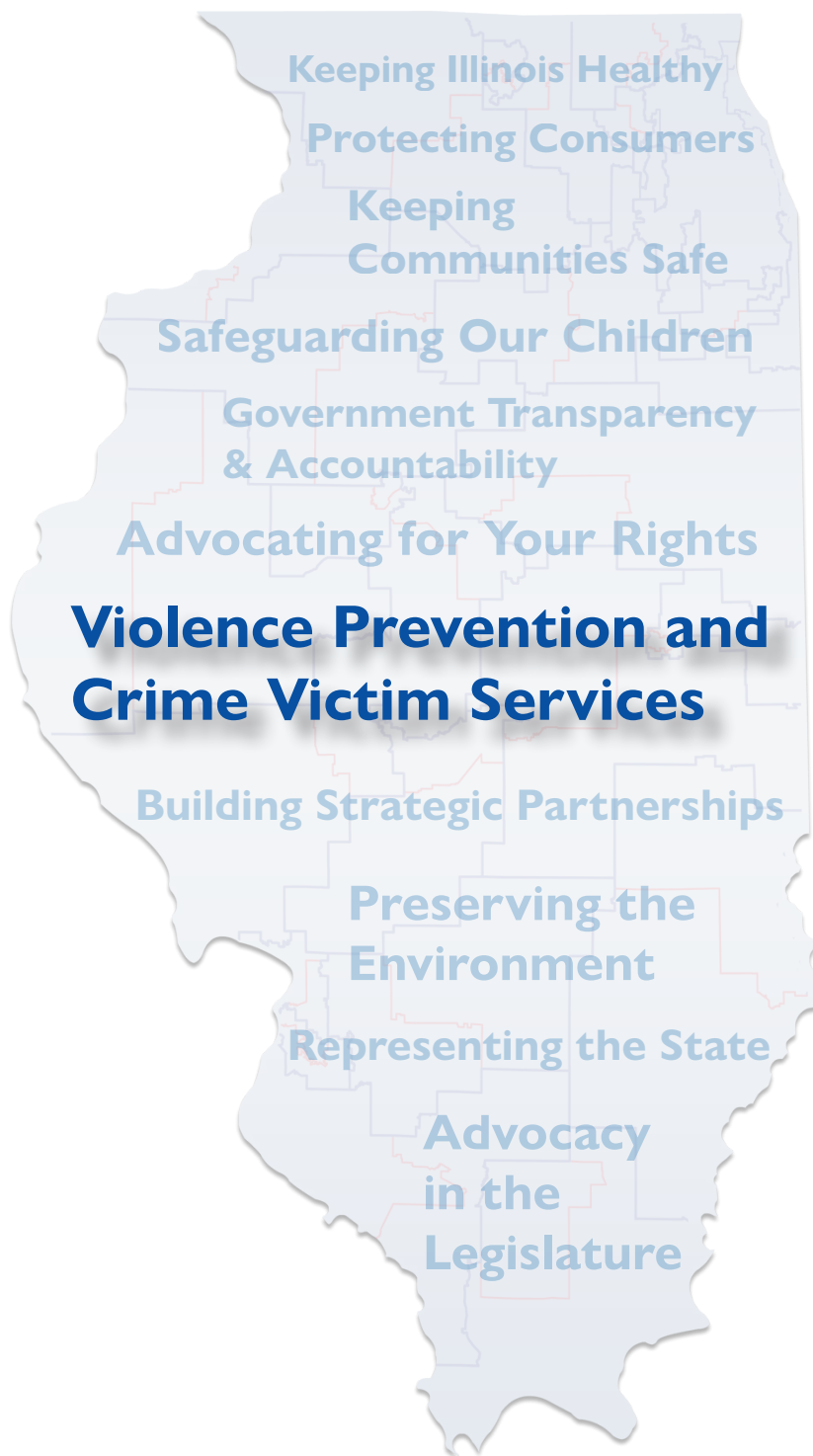


Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services

- Crime Victims Compensation Program
- Illinois Address Confidentiality Program
- Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program
- VCVA Grant Program
- Automated Victim Notification Program
- Illinois Victim Assistance Academy
- Illinois Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program
- Statewide Victim Assistance Program

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
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Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services

The effects of crime on victims persist long past the actual incident. Attorney General Raoul's Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services Division helps victims and families on their road to recovery. The Division administers seven programs statewide to help victims of crime rebuild their lives.

Expanding the Reach of Crime Victims Compensation Program:

The Crime Victims Compensation Bureau provides financial assistance to eligible victims of violent crime and their families. Eligible applicants may receive up to \$27,000 to cover out-of-pocket expenses related to the crime when all other means of payment have been exhausted. Some of the expenses that are eligible for compensation include, hospital and medical expenses, funeral and burial costs, relocation expenses, and lost wages. The office enhanced the way its division identifies individuals' eligibility for assistance as survivors of crimes. Understanding that treating the trauma experienced by victims of violence makes it less likely they will become perpetrators of violence in the future, the office expanded its services to diverse victims, including victims of gun violence. Meanwhile, the office continued to serve the unique needs of victims of sexual assault and domestic violence and advocated for legislative changes to increase the reach of the program to all victims.



Outreach to Victim Advocates and Service Providers: The office has made a concerted effort in 2019 and 2020 to increase awareness about the Crime Victims Compensation Program and help applicants for compensation to apply for benefits. To gather insight from the organizations that assist victims of crime in Illinois, the Attorney General hosted town hall meetings with advocates and service providers for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and also for those working to support victims of community violence. These town hall meetings helped inform many improvements to the Crime Victims Compensation Program.

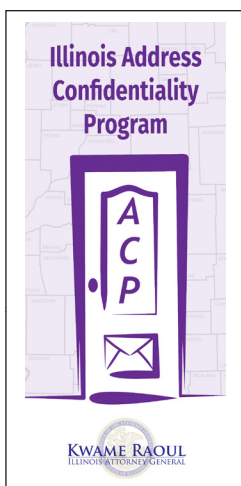


Attorney General Raoul spoke with community organizations in three Town Halls to develop solutions for delivering services effectively.

Updating Materials and Resources: The office created a PowerPoint presentation with a voice

recording to explain the application process to victims, as well as for organizations who help assist victims. Documents were rewritten to clarify the process and informational posters were redesigned to promote awareness of the Program.

Crime Victim Services Newsletter: The office also created a newsletter for survivor and victim advocate groups so that these groups remain informed about important issues and events involving the Crime Victims Compensation Program. The office distributes this newsletter to more than 200 organizations that support victims in Illinois.



[View ACP Brochure](#)

Illinois Address Confidentiality Program: The Illinois Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) provides survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking and their household members with a substitute address to use as their home, school, and work addresses, instead of the actual address in public records. The ACP substitute address helps prevent perpetrators from locating survivors. The ACP substitute address can be used by participants when creating or updating public records, such as for use on a driver's license or state-issued identification card. The ACP also provides a mail-forwarding service for all first-class mail sent to the substitute address. State and local government agencies are required to use the substitute address when creating a new public record related to the survivor or household member and when corresponding with the individual. The Attorney General's office recently oversaw the expansion of the ACP program to include survivors of sexual assault and stalking, in addition to victims of domestic violence.

Violent Crime Victims Assistance Program: The Office of the Attorney General provides grant funding for victim and witness services and victim advocacy through the Violent Crime Victims Assistance (VCVA) Program. VCVA grant funds provide valuable support to the entire spectrum of victim services agencies represented in Illinois. Funds awarded to agencies are used for a variety of different programs, such as domestic violence services and homicide survivor groups, and are used to support a variety of different services offered at rape crisis centers, children advocacy centers, other community-based organizations, and State's Attorney offices. VCVA funds increase the ability of all funded agencies to serve more victims with compassionate, high quality services.

For the state Fiscal Year 2021, the Office of the Attorney General awarded 245 VCVA grants totaling \$7,491,090, which represents an increase of 25 percent in total grant funding compared to the prior fiscal year. **Agencies in 80 Illinois counties directly receive VCVA funds.** Some of these agencies serve as regional centers and provide service through several adjacent

counties.

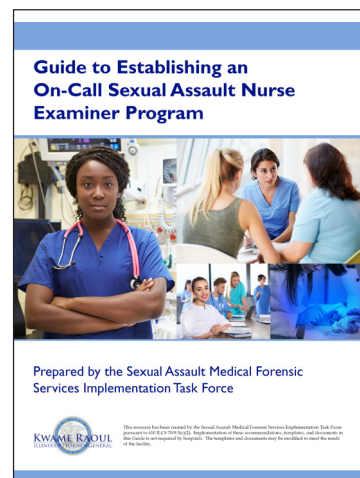
Increasing Awareness of the VCVA Grant Program: In 2020, VCVA staff engaged in outreach to encourage new organizations to apply for VCVA grants. This included community violence and violence prevention programs who do important work in underserved, high crime target neighborhoods. **This effort resulted in 10 new organizations receiving funding to conduct important neighborhood outreach to crime victims, trauma-informed services in area hospitals, and direct services to homicide survivors.** VCVA staff also provided training and instructions on the grant application process.

Automated Victim Notification Program: The Automated Victim Notification (AVN) Program is a free statewide system that provides victims, witnesses, family members, law enforcement, probation officers, or any interested member of the public with up-to-date information about any change in an offender's case or custody status. These updates are provided to registered users 24-hours a day and are delivered via phone, email, or text, in English or Spanish. Since 2001, the AVN Program has provided information to more than one million registered users. **During Fiscal Year 2020, the system provided 835,096 telephonic notifications, 153,856 email notifications, and 140,213 text notifications.**

Illinois Victim Assistance Academy: Through funding from a federal grant, the Office of the Attorney General maintains an Illinois Victim Assistance Academy (IVAA), which provides comprehensive training to victim advocates, criminal justice professionals and social service providers in order to better serve victims of crime. **During the summer of 2020, the IVAA hosted 11 trainings on a diverse array of topics, including financial recovery for seniors who are victims of violent crimes.**

Illinois Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program:

The Illinois SANE program trains registered nurses and other professionals who treat and assist sexual assault patients to reduce re-traumatization of victims, improve the quality of forensic evidence collection, which in turn increases prosecution rates of offenders. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners are crucial in ensuring that sexual assault patients receive more compassionate care. In 2020, the Illinois SANE Program developed the online Illinois Sexual Assault and Medical Forensic Services 2-hour Training to provide hospital emergency department clinical staff with a trauma-informed understanding of caring for sexual assault patients. **In the first year, more than 7,000 health care providers participated in the training.**



[*Learn about the SANE Program*](#)

Statewide Victim Assistance Program: The Office of the Attorney General provides services to crime victims and witnesses who are involved in cases that are being prosecuted by the Office of the Attorney General. Program services are available to crime victims and witnesses, assistant attorneys general, and any of the 102 State's Attorneys across Illinois who have requested the office's assistance with their criminal cases.

In this Section:



Building Strategic Partnerships

- Collaborative Multi-state Efforts
- Relationships with Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcements Partners

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
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BUILDING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

COLLABORATIVE MULTI-STATE EFFORTS

Many of the issues the Office of the Attorney General handles to protect the public interest in Illinois do not stop at state lines. Nationwide consumer schemes, federal efforts to roll back rights, and multi-state crime schemes are just a few issues that require cooperation between states in multi-state lawsuits, amicus or “friend of the court” briefs, letters, comments, and statements. Attorney General Raoul is committed to working with attorneys general from across the country

From January 2019 to December 2020, the office has joined in 69 Amicus Briefs, 51 Letters, 49 lawsuits, 60 comments, and 8 statements. The following are some examples of the Office’s work in multi-state coalitions.

States’ Authority to Prosecute COVID-19 Price Gouging: Attorney General Raoul led a bipartisan coalition of 31 states in filing an amicus in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit to support states’ authority to enforce price gouging regulations to protect consumers during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Raoul and the coalition are urging the appellate court to overturn the district court’s decision in a lawsuit filed by the Online Merchants Guild in the state of Kentucky. The district court entered a preliminary injunction preventing Kentucky from enforcing price gouging regulations against retailers selling products on Amazon. In the brief, Raoul and the coalition state that national and local emergencies, such as the pandemic, create significant shortages for essential items. State price gouging laws are essential to ensuring that goods can be fairly allocated among residents, and to preventing bad actors from profiting off of residents by charging excessively high prices for goods that are scarce.

Equal Rights Amendment: Attorney General Raoul, together with the attorneys general of Virginia and Nevada, sought a writ of mandamus compelling the National Archivist to recognize the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) as the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The ERA guarantees equal rights for all Americans regardless of their sex. This lawsuit follows Illinois’ ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in 2018 and Virginia’s ratification vote in 2020, passing the constitutional threshold of 38 states required for the ERA to become the 28th Amendment. The



AG Raoul and the Attorneys General of Virginia and Nevada called on the federal administration to formally recognize the ERA as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution.

office's briefing on dispositive motions was supported by 11 amicus briefs representing a broad spectrum of women's and civil rights groups, international human rights organizations, 22 other states and the District of Columbia, and more than a hundred businesses who support equality. In March 2021, a district court judge in the District of Columbia granted the motion to dismiss filed by the prior administration's Department of Justice, finding that the states lack standing to sue in court. Attorney General Raoul will continue to fight for the explicit prohibition of all forms of discrimination based on sex. In May 2021, Attorney General Raoul and the attorneys general filed a notice of appeal in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.



Attorney General Raoul and the U.S. Secret Service have partnered on several events to identify threats of violent crime in schools and public spaces.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENTS PARTNERS

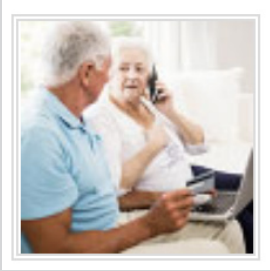
Besides working with partners in other states, the Office of the Attorney General utilizes partnerships with different units of government within Illinois to serve the mission of the office more effectively. For state and local partners, the Office of the Attorney General can provide specialized training, more resources, and foster connections between state entities. When the office engages with federal partners, our office can broaden the resources available to our attorneys and staff to engage on the most cutting-edge information from a nation-wide perspective.

Illinois Juvenile Prosecutors Institute: The Office of the Attorney General partnered with the Cook County State's Attorney Office to obtain a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to create the first ever training program for juvenile prosecutors. This is an important source of education for prosecutors all over Illinois who work on

child neglect cases, as well as the prosecution of criminal offenses committed by juveniles.

Service on Law Enforcement Boards and Commissions: Per state statute, Attorney General Raoul serves on several different state boards that serve the state of Illinois, including the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) and Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board. On ICJIA, the Attorney General's office sits on the finance committee, providing input and advice on the award of grants administered by ICJIA.

In this Section:



Keeping Illinois Healthy

- Addressing the Opioid Crisis
- Protecting Patients

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
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Keeping Illinois Healthy

The health and wellness of our communities are an important asset to our state as a whole and each individual living in Illinois. Attorney General Raoul works to protect consumers as they navigate the complexities of the healthcare system. The work of the office in this area includes direct mediation with insurance companies and providers on behalf of consumers who contact our Health Care Bureau for assistance in accessing their healthcare benefits. The office also engages in litigation against manufacturers who market dangerous products. Attorney General Raoul has also taken steps to hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for their roles in the opioid crisis, which claims the lives of six Illinois residents every day.

ADDRESSING THE OPIOID CRISIS

Holding Drug Companies Accountable for the Opioid Crisis: The Office of the Attorney General filed lawsuits against Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family, as well as several other opioid manufacturers, over misleading marketing practices designed to significantly increase prescriptions for opioid painkillers, while also downplaying their health risks. The Purdue/Sackler lawsuit alleges that between 2008 and 2017, Purdue dispatched sales representatives to Illinois hundreds of thousands of times. These representatives informed doctors and patients that the risks of opioids could be controlled. Despite knowing that its opioid painkillers were dangerous and being misused and diverted, Purdue allegedly targeted doctors with addicted patients and whose patients were diverting drugs for unlawful use. The lawsuit asks the court to prohibit Purdue's deceptive conduct in order to ensure it does not happen again in the future, to assess penalties against Purdue, and to require Purdue Pharma to pay to help remediate the problems caused by opioids.

The office's lawsuit naming several other opioid manufacturers makes similar allegations about those companies' unfair and deceptive marketing tactics. These lawsuits are still pending. In February 2021, Attorney General Raoul, along with a bipartisan coalition of 53 attorneys general, announced a \$573 million settlement with consulting firm, McKinsey & Company. The settlement resolved a multi-state investigation into McKinsey's role in providing consulting services to opioid manufacturers, including Purdue Pharma, helping those companies to promote and maximize sales of their opioid products. In addition to providing funds, the settlement includes comprehensive injunctive relief and requires McKinsey to disclose tens of thousands of internal documents as part of a public repository.



In February 2021, Attorney General Raoul, along with a bipartisan coalition of 53 attorneys general, announced a \$573 million settlement with consulting firm, McKinsey & Company.

Taking Action Against Opioid Distributors: The Office of the Attorney General also filed legal actions against the three largest opioid distributors, alleging inadequate monitoring of suspicious orders that fueled diversion of these drugs toward illegal and harmful uses. **Additionally, through a multi-state effort, Attorney General Raoul was able to achieve a settlement of \$1.6 billion to be paid by opioid manufacturer Mallinckrodt.** This settlement will be handled through Mallinckrodt's bankruptcy. The \$1.6 billion will be used to cover the costs of opioid addiction treatment and related efforts that will address the opioid crisis, including valid claims related to Mallinckrodt's role in the opioid crisis raised by non-governmental claimants.

Stopping Price Inflation of Generic Drugs: Attorney General Kwame Raoul joined a 44-state coalition in a lawsuit against Teva Pharmaceuticals and 19 of the nation's largest generic drug manufacturers alleging a broad conspiracy to artificially inflate and manipulate prices, reduce competition



and unreasonably restrain trade for more than 100 different generic drugs. The lawsuit also names 15 individual senior executive defendants who were responsible for sales, marketing, pricing and operations. The alleged schemes increased prices affecting the health insurance market, taxpayer-funded healthcare programs like Medicare and Medicaid, and individuals who must pay artificially-inflated prices for their prescriptions drugs. The generic drugs subject to this alleged price fixing are

used to treat a range of diseases and conditions from basic infections to diabetes, cancer, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, HIV, ADHD, and more. In some instances, the alleged coordinated price increases were more than 1,000 percent. This lawsuit remains pending.

Dangerous Products for Women: The Office of the Attorney General was able to achieve significant settlements from two companies for their deceptive marketing of transvaginal surgical mesh devices, which use a synthetic material that is surgically implanted through the vagina to support the pelvic organs of women who suffer from stress urinary incontinence or pelvic organ prolapse. These are common conditions faced by women due to a weakening in their pelvic floor muscles caused by childbirth, age and other factors. **Through the efforts of a multi-state coalition, Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiary Ethicon, Inc. will pay \$116.9 million for their deceptive marketing of these devices, with Illinois to receive more than \$3.8 million under the settlement.** In another settlement, R. Bard and its parent company, Becton, Dickinson and Co., have agreed to pay \$60 million to the 48 participating states and the District of Columbia, with more than \$1.64 million directed to Illinois. Although C.R. Bard stopped

selling transvaginal mesh, the settlement provides injunctive relief, requiring both C.R. Bard and Becton, Dickinson and Co. to adhere to certain terms if they reenter the transvaginal mesh market.

Health Care Bureau: The Health Care Bureau helps Illinois consumers to secure the care and coverage to which they are entitled. The Bureau operates a toll-free hotline as a way for consumers to ask questions, file complaints, or request assistance to resolve specific healthcare related problems.

In 2019 and 2020 the Health Care Bureau successfully mediated 811 cases and saved Illinois consumers more than \$7.5 million.

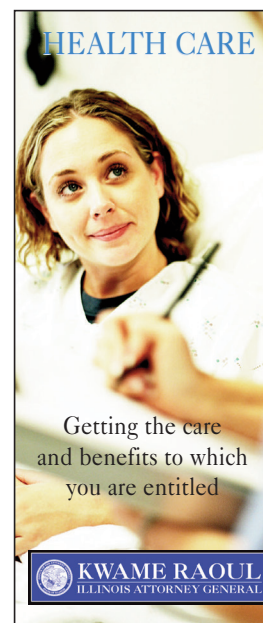
PROTECTING PATIENTS

Hospital Community Benefit Plan Reports: Pursuant to the Illinois Community Benefits Act, each year, the Attorney General receives a report from non-profit hospitals regarding their community benefits plan, which also includes the amount of charity care provided each year calculated at cost.

Fair Billing for Illinois Patients: The Fair Patient Billing Act imposes certain obligations upon Illinois hospitals, including notification to patients of the availability of financial assistance; provision of certain information in patient bills; following certain procedures before pursuing collection actions against insured and uninsured patients; and notification to patients concerning the costs associated with out-of-network providers. Under this Act, the office has issued rules concerning matters, such as standard provisions to be included in all applications for financial assistance and appropriate methodologies for the determination of presumptive eligibility for financial assistance. The Attorney General enforces the provisions of the Fair Patient Billing Act.

Protecting the Affordable Care Act: The signing of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by then-President Barack Obama ushered in an era of insurance and health care protections that help tens of millions of Americans. In the past two years, the Office of the Attorney General has taken important steps to protect the ACA for the benefit of the people of Illinois.

In March 2019, the office partnered with 20 other state attorneys general to file a brief to uphold the ACA in a lawsuit, which was filed in February 2018 by two individuals and 18 states, called *Texas v. U.S.* The initial lawsuit challenged the “individual mandate” of the ACA, which required individuals to maintain health insurance or pay a tax. Texas’ lawsuit was filed after Congress reduced that tax to zero dollars in December 2017. The



[View Brochure](#)

plaintiffs argued that this change made the minimum coverage provision unconstitutional. They further argued that the remainder of the ACA could not be “severed” from that one provision, so the entire Act must be struck down.

The brief filed in support of the ACA filed by the office and its partners not only argued to uphold the Act’s constitutionality and severability but set out the devastating consequences of the purported repeal on some of our most vulnerable populations, particularly children with preexisting conditions, seniors and people who rely on Medicaid for coverage.

In this Section:



Keeping Communities Safe

- Collaborations with Law Enforcement Entities
- Safety from Gun Violence
- Sexually Violent Persons
- Criminal Prosecutions & Trial Assistance
- Special Prosecutions Bureau
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Keeping Communities Safe

As the state's chief law enforcement officer, Attorney General Raoul works with law enforcement and state's attorneys across Illinois to make our communities safe for all. Through several different criminal divisions and bureaus, the office is able to take on specific criminal prosecutions on behalf of state agencies, such as pursuing tax scofflaws, as well as assist county prosecutors in certain circumstances. This work and collaboration with law enforcement leads to prosecuting drug traffickers, keeping sex offenders off the streets, and finding justice for the victims of senseless crimes.

COLLABORATIONS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT ENTITIES

Attorney General Raoul has prioritized building relationships with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to both expand the reach of the resources of the office and better serve Illinois communities.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits Fraud Task Force: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of the Attorney General has received and investigated complaints related to unemployment insurance benefits fraud by scammers who use personal information taken as a part of data breaches to apply for unemployment benefits. To more effectively address these complaints, Attorney General Raoul partnered with the FBI to establish the Attorney General's Task Force on Insurance Benefits Fraud. The aim of the task force is to enhance collaboration among state and federal agencies investigating and prosecuting forms of unemployment benefits fraud. In addition to the Illinois Attorney General's office and the FBI, the task force is composed of the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the Illinois State Police, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the Illinois Department of Revenue, the Internal Revenue Service, as well as the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Sheriff's Association, and the Illinois State's Attorneys Association.

Opioid Task Force: In order to share investigative resources to combat the opioid crisis in Illinois, the Attorney General's office initiated a multidisciplinary opioid task force comprised of state and federal law enforcement partners and representatives of the health insurance industry.



Attorney General Raoul announces attorney general's Task Force on unemployment insurance benefits fraud. [View press release](#)

SAFETY FROM GUN VIOLENCE

Training Law Enforcement on Firearms Restraining Order: The office developed a resource for law enforcement to promote a new law that allows for certain people, including law enforcement, to petition a circuit court to obtain a Firearms Restraining Order (FRO). **The FRO is a civil order preventing a person from accessing firearms for up to six months if the court finds they present a significant danger to self or others.** The goal of the resource was to help increase awareness amongst the law enforcement community about this new law and to aid law enforcement on how this important safety mechanism can be used to prevent a person from harming themselves or others.

Charges for Gunrunning: In March 2019, the office charged two Cook County men with gunrunning after federal law enforcement discovered evidence that they were selling stolen guns in Cook and DuPage counties. Nine guns, five of them stolen, were recovered, preventing them from being used in violent crimes. The public is reminded that defendants are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Crime Gun-tracing Platform: The office began building a crime gun-tracing platform to help law enforcement agencies throughout Illinois share information about firearms used in crimes. The goal is to provide law enforcement with data that will shed light on multi-county and even



multi-state gun trafficking operations, allowing law enforcement to more effectively disrupt the flow of illegal guns onto the streets. In addition to building the platform, the office has engaged with municipalities across the state to increase the number of jurisdictions that participate in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' eTrace system and share data with other law enforcement agencies throughout Illinois to trace crime guns.

3-D Gun Printing: A federal judge blocked the online release of blueprints for 3D-printed guns as the result of a lawsuit the Attorney General's Office filed along with 20 other state attorneys general. 3D printing could give terrorists and other criminals at-home access to untraceable, undetectable guns.

Supporting Reasonable Restrictions on Guns: In four lawsuits, the Attorney General's office filed amicus briefs supporting the right of states to enact reasonable firearm restrictions such as bans on large-capacity magazines.

SEXUALLY VIOLENT PERSONS

The Office of the Attorney General's Sexually Violent Persons (SVP) Bureau works with the Illinois Department of Corrections to institute civil commitment proceedings against qualifying sexual offenders prior to their release from prison. When there is a determination that an offender poses a threat to the community if released, the bureau will file a civil commitment petition with the circuit court to ensure the dangerous offender will not return to the community. Following case initiation, the offender will be transferred to a Department of Human Services (DHS) facility where sex offender treatment is offered with the goal of sufficiently rehabilitating the offender to allow their eventual return to the community. The following are a few examples of cases handled by the Sexually Violent Persons Bureau.

In re the Commitment of Raymond Babcock: This matter was a jury trial handled by the SVP Bureau in June 2020 in Winnebago County. Respondent Babcock has a history of problematic behavior and what has been described as abnormal sexual behavior beginning in childhood. He began offending against young children early in his life, and continued up until his arrest for a sexually violent offense in 2010. He sexually offended against children aged 3-10 years old, and has multiple convictions for sex offenses. Evaluators from IDOC and DHS diagnosed the respondent with pedophilic disorder and antisocial personality disorder. Both evaluators opined that those mental disorders predispose the respondent to commit future acts of sexual violence and concluded that he is substantially probable to engage in such acts if released to the community. **Based on this determination from these experts, the SVP Bureau was able to secure the civil commitment of the respondent.**

In re the Commitment of Jesse Gaskey: This case was a bench trial handled by the SVP Bureau in June 2020 in Whiteside County. Respondent has two convictions for sex offenses, as well as admissions to two additional uncharged sex offenses. He sexually offended against multiple girls in their early teen years. Evaluators from IDOC and DHS diagnosed the respondent with other specified paraphilic disorder, sexually attracted to non-consenting persons. Both evaluators opined that those mental disorders predispose the respondent to commit future acts of sexual violence and concluded that he is substantially probable to engage in such acts if released to the community. **The SVP Bureau was able to obtain a ruling from the judge to secure the civil commitment of the respondent.**

CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS & TRIAL ASSISTANCE

Under special circumstances, the Attorney General's office assists local and federal authorities with criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Finding Justice for Senseless Acts of Murder: In conjunction with Vermilion County State's Attorney Office, in December 2019, the Office of the Attorney General secured a murder conviction and 50-year sentence for a woman who struck her wife on the head and left her unconscious on the floor of their home for three days without seeking medical attention. Prosecutors from the office also secured the conviction in August 2019 of a man hired by a drug dealer to kill two people in Danville. That defendant is now serving life in prison for this senseless act of violence.

Conviction for Drive-by Shooting: Prosecutors from the office, in June 2019, secured a murder conviction for a man who shot a 17-year-old multiple times during a drive-by shooting in Chicago. The victim was standing on the sidewalk near his home when he was shot eight times from a vehicle driving down his street. Shortly after the shooting, two Chicago Police officers on routine patrol saw the vehicle speed through a stop sign and began chasing it, resulting in the defendant's arrest and recovery of two handguns used to shoot the victim. The defendant was found guilty of first degree murder by a jury and was sentenced to 45 years in prison.

SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS BUREAU

The Special Prosecutions Bureau consists of two units, the Financial Crimes Unit and the Criminal Revenue Prosecutions Unit, each of which prosecutes different types of white collar crimes and works with different investigating law enforcement agencies.

FINANCIAL CRIMES UNIT

Attorney General Raoul's Financial Crimes Unit handles cases involving fraud, forgery, embezzlement and identify theft schemes. These cases sometimes involve fraud perpetrated against state and federal agencies, Illinois business, and residents. The unit utilizes its experienced prosecutors and collaborations with other government entities to both investigate and prosecute these cases. In 2019 and 2020, the Financial Crimes Unit was able to secure \$1,974,862.54 in restitution to be paid to victims of financial crimes.

Fraud on U.S. Postal Service: The Financial Crimes Unit was able to hold accountable a business owner who defrauded the U.S. Postal Service. The defendant operated a contract mail carrier business and stole funds that his company obtained from the U.S. Postal Service which were intended to be used to pay for workers' compensation insurance for his employees. He defrauded the U.S. Postal service of more than \$1.9 million over a period of approximately 12 years. **The defendant pled guilty to theft over \$100,000 and was sentenced to six years in prison.**



In 2019 and 2020, the Financial Crimes Unit was able to secure \$1,974,862.54 in restitution to be paid to victims of financial crimes.

Theft of Fund from College Fraternity: In 2019, the Financial Crimes Unit handled a case of a former president of the Sigma Chi Home Association at Northwestern University who was charged with stealing more than \$400,000 from the association's funds. The defendant was arraigned in Cook County Circuit Court for one Class 1 felony charge of theft of between \$100,000 and \$500,000, which is punishable by up to four to 15 years in prison. The defendant allegedly transferred funds belonging to the Home Association, a nonprofit corporation operated by Sigma Chi alumni that collects dues to be used for management of the undergraduate fraternity house, to his personal account. The office alleged that during his leadership, the defendant transferred approximately \$460,000 to his personal account and allegedly used the Home Association's money for his personal expenses, such as online trading websites, and payments on credit cards and to the Chicago Yacht Club. The public is reminded that the defendant is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Email Compromise Scheme: The Financial Crimes Unit handled a case where the defendant was involved in an email compromise scheme. A business was fraudulently tricked into transferring more than \$100,000 in funds to an account accessible by the defendant, through an email that appeared to be from one of the company's routine business connections. The defendant was sentenced to four years in prison.

CRIMINAL REVENUE PROSECUTIONS UNIT

The Criminal Revenue Prosecutions Unit works with the Bureau of Criminal Investigations at the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) to prosecute all criminal violations of the Illinois Tax Code. Prosecuting these cases restores funds that should be used for important government operations and programs. **In 2019 and 2020, the Criminal Revenue Prosecutions Unit obtained orders of restitution to the Illinois Department of Revenue in the amount of \$1,769,149.22.** The following are some examples of the work performed by the unit.

Prosecuting Liquor Tax Evasion: In April 2019, the office filed charges against five Chicago liquor store operators as part of a sweep to crack down on sales tax evasion and interstate liquor bootlegging. The charges were part of a joint effort with the IDOR to investigate and prosecute untaxed or bootlegged liquor brought in from outside Illinois. The Secret Service assisted IDOR with the investigation. Four defendants were charged in Cook County Circuit Court with sales tax evasion of more than \$100,000, a Class 1 felony punishable by up to four to 15 years in prison. Additionally, two defendants were charged with sales tax evasion of more than \$10,000,

a Class 2 felony punishable by up to three to seven years in prison. One defendant was charged with sales tax evasion of more than \$500. The public is reminded that defendants are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Stopping Fraud Against County Government Tax Collection: In December 2020, the Attorney General's office announced that a Cook County parking garage operator had been charged with defrauding Cook County out of more than \$100,000 in parking taxes. The man was charged in Cook County Circuit Court with theft of government property over \$100,000, a Class X felony punishable by up to 30 years in prison; theft of governmental property exceeding \$10,000 and not exceeding \$100,000, a Class 1 felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison; and wire fraud, a Class 3 felony punishable by up to five years in prison. The Cook County Parking Lot and Garage Operations Tax requires parking lot operators to remit tax revenues collected from customers to the Cook County Department of Revenue. According to the indictment, between Jan. 1, 2017 and Jan. 20, 2018, Mid-City Parking, Inc. collected more than \$100,000 in taxes that the defendant allegedly did not remit to Cook County. The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



First Conviction for Use of “Tax Zapper”: In September 2019, the Office of the Attorney General secured a guilty plea for an owner of a Chicago restaurant related to the underreporting of more than \$1 million in sales in an effort by the business owner to avoid paying the full amount of sales and use taxes to the state. **The defendant pleaded guilty to possessing an automated sales suppression device, also known as a “tax zapper.”** Tax zapper software

or tax zapper devices automatically delete some or all of a business' records of cash sales transactions and reconcile data so that reported sales appear to match reported income. Illinois banned the use of sales suppression software and devices in 2013, and this is the state's first conviction involving zapper technology. The business owner was sentenced to two years in prison and one year of supervised release and was immediately taken into custody. The investigation was conducted by IDOR's Criminal Investigations Division with support from Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Criminal Investigation.

PROSECUTING MEDICAID FRAUD

Working with the Illinois State Police, the Office of the Attorney General Medicaid Fraud Unit investigates and prosecutes incidents of fraud and deception that involve the Illinois Medicaid program, which provides healthcare to people and families in need. Stamping out fraud in this

program safeguards public money that is intended to operate this important healthcare program.

Neglect by Caregiver of Disabled Person: In August 2020, the office secured a three-year prison sentence for a Winnebago County man who failed to provide personal services to his mother. The man was sentenced after pleading guilty to criminal abuse or neglect of a person with a disability. The man was a personal assistant for his mother, but neglected to care for her, which ultimately resulted in her death. As a personal assistant, the man was paid by the Illinois Department of Human Services to provide services that would allow his disabled mother to reside at home. The case was investigated by the Illinois State Police Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

Stopping the Over-Dispensing of Insulin Pens: The Office of the Attorney General was able to recover \$2.8 million for the Illinois Medicaid Program as part of two nation-wide settlements with Walgreens. After an investigation led by the National Association of Medicaid Fraud Control Units (NAMFCU) Team, which included attorneys from the Illinois Medicaid Fraud Bureau, it was established that Walgreens knowingly over-dispensed insulin pens to Medicaid and also Medicare patients by programming its computer system to automatically dispense a certain number of insulin pens, even if a patient's prescription called for fewer pens. This practice contributed to overspending for these publicly supported health programs. The nationwide settlement was joined by 49 other states and the federal government, with a total recovery of more than \$260 million.

STATEWIDE GRAND JURY

The Office of the Attorney General is authorized to investigate and indict cases spanning multiple counties that involve drugs, guns, or computers through the Statewide Grand Jury Act. This Act allows the office to convene a Statewide Grand Jury to pursue specific types of cases that involve multiple jurisdictions. The Attorney General continues to advocate for an expansion of the Statewide Grand Jury Act to allow the office to pursue charges related to government corruption. The following are some examples of the work of the Statewide Grand Jury Bureau from 2019 and 2020.

Getting Methamphetamine Off Our Streets: The Office of the Attorney General secured a guilty plea for possession and delivery of more than 100 grams of methamphetamine. A Grundy County Circuit Court Judge found the Joliet man guilty of possession of 100 to 400 grams of methamphetamine with intent to deliver, a Class X felony. The defendant was sentenced to 10 years in prison and immediately remanded into custody. The office prosecuted the case following an investigation by the Illinois State Police's Joliet Metropolitan Area Narcotics Squad and the U.S. Department of

Homeland Security. The defendant was arrested in March 2020 after delivering more than 100 grams of methamphetamine to undercover officers at a Best Buy parking lot in Joliet.

Taking on Drug Traffickers: In April 2019, Attorney General Raoul and the Kane County State's Attorney Office partnered to prosecute three men who were engaged in trafficking large quantities of heroin and cocaine. One man pleaded guilty to felony drug conspiracy charges, a Class X Felony and was sentenced to more than 19 years in prison, while the other two were also each sentenced to 19 years in prison. The office and the Kane County partnered to prosecute the case following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs' Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations and the Federal Bureau of Investigations. Homeland Security began surveillance in June 2017, which is when one of the men was pulled over while driving a truck carrying a tire for a semi-truck. Officers executing a search warrant discovered more than 11 kilos of heroin and more than 11 kilos of cocaine hidden in the tire.

Cocaine Drug Bust: In January 2020, a prosecution led by the Statewide Grand Jury Bureau resulted in a Barrington man being found guilty of possessing more than 900 grams of cocaine, and sentenced to 15 years in prison. A DuPage County Circuit Court found the defendant guilty of possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver, a Class X felony. The man was sentenced to 15 years in prison and immediately remanded into custody.

INVESTIGATIONS

The Office of the Attorney General maintains a small, but highly specialized and trained team of investigators, who are sworn officers and assist with



both the criminal and civil sides of the office. This team of investigators supports litigation actions and prosecutions by performing background checks, serving process on litigants, tracking down defendants, and assisting in arrests. The Investigations Division is led by a former FBI agent and is staffed by professionals that have extensive experience with state and federal law enforcement entities and local police departments.

Increased Training and Recruiting Experienced Personnel: The Investigations Division has been improving its intelligence abilities and skills by increasing training on intelligence and information searches for the division's staff. In addition, the division has recruited investigators with backgrounds in financial crimes and previous experience working at federal law enforcement entities.

Assistance with Arrests: In 2019, investigators from the Office of the Attorney General assisted in the arrest of a DuPage County chiropractor, who was alleged to have abused several of his female patients. After charges were filed by the DuPage County State's Attorney's office, the chiropractor pleaded guilty to aggravated battery in a public place.

In July of 2020, investigators also assisted with the arrest of a Will County woman who was arrested for charges of theft after she allegedly stole money from her employer, an AIDS clinic. She allegedly fabricated several letters claiming to be part of a fraud investigation. These fabricated letters were allegedly authored by several individuals, which included U.S. Senator Dick Durbin and the prior Governor, Attorney General, and Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives. At the time these letters were sent, she was allegedly redirecting money to her own accounts. This case is currently being prosecuted by the office's Public Integrity Bureau. The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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Advocating for Your Rights

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- Immigrant Rights
- Workplace Rights
- Women's Rights & Reproductive Justice
- Military and Veterans' Rights
- Protecting Our Elections
- Advocating For Older Residents
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Jump To:

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Advocating for Your Rights

Protecting the public interest is one of the greatest responsibilities of the Attorney General's office. Attorney General Raoul is dedicated to this mission and to advocating for equality and justice.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The Office of the Attorney General protects the civil rights of all Illinois residents, proudly defending equality under the law. The office enforces anti-discrimination laws within Illinois and uses litigation and advocacy to preserve and expand state and federal civil rights protections.

Ensuring Constitutional Policing in the City of Chicago: The Attorney General's office began monitoring the implementation of the Chicago Police Department (CPD) consent decree, which took effect in March 2019, guided by the principle that unbiased and constitutional policing practices are needed to re-build trust between law enforcement and the public. The Attorney General's office has helped transform dozens of CPD policies and trainings to bring them into compliance with the Consent Decree's requirements. **Because of Consent Decree reforms, CPD officers are now required to report when they point their firearms at members of the public, the public can track when CPD officers use force in their neighborhood through CPD's public website, and CPD officers are required to participate in annual de-escalation training.**



AG Raoul spoke with community members about the Chicago Police Reform Consent Decree at Chicago State University in April 2019.

Multi-state Letter to Congress About Police Reform Legislation: In June 2020, the Attorney General's office co-led a coalition of 18 state attorneys general to urge Congress to expand federal law to give state attorneys general clear statutory authority to investigate patterns or practices of unconstitutional policing under the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. The letter argued that state attorneys general should have authority to investigate and resolve patterns or practices of unconstitutional policing in federal court, particularly in the event that the U.S. Department of Justice fails to use its authority to act. During the end of the 101st General Assembly, the Attorney General's office was able to successfully advocate for state level authority to investigate these pattern and practice violations. These provisions were included in the omnibus legislation initiated by the Legislative Black Caucus, which was signed into law by the Governor as Public Act 101-0652.



Attorney General Raoul's police reform, criminal justice initiatives passed by General Assembly.
[Press Release](#)

Fighting for the Rights of Transgender Teens: The Attorney General's office joined a multi-state amicus brief supporting a Virginia transgender teen's right to access the restroom corresponding with his gender and have his school records correspond with his updated birth certificate.

Protecting LGBTQ+ Individuals from Discrimination: The Attorney General's office took the lead on an amicus brief, signed by a total of 22 state attorneys general, in a pivotal Supreme Court case considering whether the Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from workplace discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. The office argued that federal anti-discrimination laws protect LGBTQ+ employees. In a subsequent decision, the Supreme Court agreed with the position argued by the coalition and now LGBTQ+ people in Illinois and throughout the country enjoy the protection of this critical anti-discrimination law.

Equal Access Rule: The Attorney General's office led a multi-state coalition of 23 attorneys general in drafting a comment letter opposing the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") proposed rule that would strip protections for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in HUD-funded shelters. The letter argued that the proposed rule should be rescinded in its entirety.

Title IX and Sexual Harassment: Attorney General Raoul joined a multi-state lawsuit challenging a U.S. Department of Education rule significantly limiting how and when schools can respond to sexual harassment and sexual violence under Title IX. Changes in the new rule include a narrowed definition of sexual harassment, geographical limitations on investigations, mandatory dismissal of certain complaints, and onerous grievance procedures (such as mandatory, live, direct cross-examination).

Race Discrimination in Public Accommodations: The Attorney General's office filed a federal pattern and practice lawsuit against an Illinois bus company that distributed racist advertisements and banned certain customers from using their service. Pursuant to the April 2019 consent decree, the Attorney General's office facilitated the transfer of payments made to actual customers harmed by the defendants' business practices. **By March 2020, more than 4,000 customers received refunds.**

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Over the past two years, the Attorney General's office has taken a stand against the federal government's repeated assaults against immigrants by advocating for just immigration policies. The office also provides resources

to immigrant communities about their rights and important services.

Protecting Student Visa Holders: When student visa protections came under attack, the office joined a lawsuit with 18 other states to challenge the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) rescission of guidance allowing international students to take classes remotely in the United States. ICE eventually agreed not to roll back these protections.

Preventing Diversion of Vital Government

Resources to Building a Border Wall: The Office of the Attorney General joined a coalition of 20 states in challenging former President Trump's illegal and unconstitutional diversion of \$1.6 billion in federal funds to build a border wall. Congress had appropriated these federal funds as resources for law enforcement, drug interdiction, and military construction projects. The coalition filed a motion to stop the diversion of the funds, arguing that such action violates the U.S. Constitution's bedrock separation of powers principles by attempting to usurp Congress's appropriation powers. The current federal administration has paused construction on the border wall and has asked the Court to hold the matter in abeyance while it assesses the legality of funding and contracting methods used to build the wall.

Protecting the Integrity of the Census: The Attorney General's office and a coalition of state attorneys general and other jurisdictions succeeded in forcing the removal of the citizenship question from the U.S. Census. The office also sued the federal government alongside another broad coalition to halt the administration's plan to exclude undocumented immigrants from the census count for purposes of apportionment of congressional districts. Similarly, the office has intervened with partner states in a federal suit in Alabama to protect the integrity of the census count against state officials who wished to exclude undocumented immigrants from the final count.

Challenging the Public Charge Regulation:

The Attorney General's office sued the Trump administration in August 2019 to fight the unlawful "Public Charge" regulation, which essentially imposes a wealth test on immigrants seeking admission or residence in the United States.

Seeking Protections from Expedited Removal:

The office filed an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in January 2020 urging the U.S. Supreme Court to strengthen protections for immigrants facing



Lunar New Year celebrations in 2019 were a welcome platform to meet with the Asian communities' representatives and plan for future initiatives.



Members of Illinois' immigrant communities joined Attorney General Raoul in speaking out against federal proposed wealth tests for those seeking entry to the U.S.

immediate removal from the U.S. Joined by 19 other attorneys general, the brief argued that individuals should be able to obtain review of decisions to remove them from the country on an expedited basis, particularly when they seek asylum. The office also noted several flaws in the Trump administration's decision to vastly expand the applicability of expedited removal within the U.S.

Protecting Refugees and Illinois's Placement System: The office co-led an amicus brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit opposing then President Trump's executive order to drastically change the system for placing refugees in the states. The order would have allowed localities to veto state placement decisions for refugees, displacing state decision-making processes and expertise honed over decades. The Fourth Circuit recently affirmed an injunction against the executive order.

Fighting Family Separation: Joining with other state attorneys general, the office has filed amicus briefs or official comment letters opposing immigrant policies that tear apart families and target vulnerable people seeking safety. These actions include fighting against family separation and the prolonged detention of children, expedited removal proceedings, the "remain in Mexico" edict, requirements that asylum-seekers apply in a third country first and present themselves only at ports of entry, and denial of asylum to victims of domestic violence.

Reclaiming Federal Funds: Attorney General Raoul filed a lawsuit alleging that former U.S. Attorney General William Barr had exceeded his authority under the Constitution and federal law by requiring Illinois law enforcement to actively participate in federal immigration matters to receive funding from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program, which provides an annual source of funding used by law enforcement for innovative programs to protect communities, prevent crime, and support victims and witnesses. The former U.S. Attorney General attempted to require Illinois authorities to allow federal immigration agents access to suspected undocumented immigrants in state custody and to provide notification when those immigrants are scheduled to be released, among other requirements. **Attorney General Raoul reached an agreement that allows \$6.6 million in federal funding to flow to Illinois law enforcement and prohibits the federal government from imposing these conditions on Illinois authorities.**

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA): The office joined a multi-state coalition which achieved two victories in helping preserve Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) for hundreds of thousands of individuals. In June 2019, the Supreme Court sided with the states in concluding that the Trump Administration's attempt to rescind DACA violated the federal Administrative Procedure Act. After the administration

in August tried to circumvent that decision and stop DACA applications as part of a “review,” the states obtained a judgment against the administration ordering that DACA be completely restored.

Blocking TPS Deportations: The Attorney General’s office has advocated for immigrants admitted under the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program, which has long assisted those fleeing from natural disasters and other dangers in Haiti, Sudan, and elsewhere. The federal government announced an end to TPS status for individuals from multiple countries, and Illinois joined with other states to file amicus briefs in favor of blocking the deportation of TPS holders.

Educating Immigrant Communities and Connecting Them to Vital Resources: In 2019, staff from the office’s outreach team made more than 250 visits to consulate offices to assist Illinois immigrants in learning their rights and accessing vital services.



Community Outreach Liaison Nettie Lasko regularly presents the services of the Attorney General’s office to the consulates in Chicago.

Engaging Immigration Advocates and Advocacy Organizations:

The Office of the Attorney General welcomed then California Attorney General Xavier Becerra to a meeting of immigration advocates, held in March 2019. The roundtable discussion, which included representatives of more than ten local and national organizations, provided an opportunity for the attorneys general to update the groups on the status of multi-state immigration litigation, as well as discuss other important issues facing immigrants and their communities, such as the inclusion of the citizenship question on the 2020 Census and the construction of additional immigration detention facilities.



Xavier Becerra, then-Attorney General of California, joined AG Raoul to visit with Illinois immigration advocates to explore common issues and national solutions.

Keep Illinois Families Together Act: The Attorney General’s office supported the Keep Illinois Families Together Act, which was signed into law in 2019, and worked to inform law enforcement agencies of their responsibilities under the new law and the Trust Act. Both laws bolster public safety by building trust between immigrant communities and the police.

Know Your Workplace Rights



Workplace Rights Bureau

[View Brochure](#)

WORKPLACE RIGHTS

Attorney General Raoul is committed to protecting the rights of all workers, regardless of their status. That means enforcing wage and labor laws, ensuring employers compete fairly for employees, and advocating for stronger workplace protections.

Increasing Authority to Protect Illinois Workers: In 2019, the Attorney General Raoul worked with the Illinois General Assembly to formally create a Worker Protection Unit within the Attorney General's office. Since its creation, the unit has used this enhanced authority to initiate investigations and bring enforcement actions against employers that violate labor laws. This legislation, SB 161 from the 101st General (Public Act 101-0527) also created an intergovernmental task force of state and local leaders, including State's Attorneys, the chiefs of the office's Special Prosecutions and Workplace Rights Bureaus. This task force was convened "virtually" throughout the pandemic so its members could continue to discuss their important collaborations.

Report on Illinois Workers: In November 2020, Attorney General Raoul issued the Worker Protection Unit Task Force Report, which highlighted the problems facing Illinois workers and the Task Force's recommendations to further protect workers' rights. The report outlined the most pressing challenges faced by Illinois workers, such as dangerous working conditions for low-wage workers, wage theft, misclassification, erosion of employee protections and benefits, employers circumventing Illinois' prevailing wage law, harassment, and discrimination toward women and people of color. The Task Force's report also highlighted ongoing efforts to address these challenges and opportunities for government entities to continue to work together. Specifically, the Task Force offered recommendations to effectively collaborate on prevention and enforcement efforts by creating subject matter enforcement working groups staffed by various government entities from the state and local level and facilitating the sharing of data between government agencies in order to improve enforcement work. Importantly, the report recommended that the task force members commit to regular communication with stakeholders in the community and labor organizations in order to improve enforcement opportunities that may be missed by traditional government points of contact.

Ending Use of Non-Compete Agreements for Low-wage Workers:

In March 2019, the office reached a settlement with four fast food chains ending their use of non-compete agreements for their workers. These agreements significantly limited their workers' future employment options in the restaurant industry. Attorney General Raoul also signed a multi-state

letter urging the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to crack down on anti-competitive behavior by employers, such as non-compete and no-poach agreements.

Fighting No-Poach Agreements: Attorney General Raoul filed a lawsuit against staffing agencies Elite Staffing, Inc., Metro Staff, Inc. and Midway Staffing, Inc., alleging that they formed unlawful agreements to refuse to solicit or hire the other employees and fix the wages paid to their employees to below-market rates. Their client, Colony Inc., allegedly facilitated the agreement by acting as a go-between to communicate about the agreement and assisted in enforcing the no-poach agreement by notifying the staffing agencies of any deviations from the agreement. These alleged actions by the staffing agencies and their client eliminated competition and harmed temporary workers in Illinois by interfering with their ability to seek better employment opportunities and better wages and benefits. The Antitrust Bureau and the Workplace Rights Bureau are partnering on this case, which is currently pending.

Protecting Workers from Sexual Harassment: The Attorney General's office initiated an investigation and reached a consent decree with Voyant, a beauty product packaging facility, after management failed to take action on sexual harassment complaints from female workers and retaliated against those who had made complaints. **The consent decree, which was entered in conjunction with a lawsuit filed in August 2020, requires Voyant to end its practice of retaliating against workers who file sexual harassment complaints and modify its practices to prevent any future sexual harassment, including training for employees.** The consent decree also requires the appointment of a monitor for a two-year period to ensure compliance with the consent decree. The monitor is funded by the \$85,000 in penalties paid for by Voyant.

Protections for LGBTQ+ Workers: The Office of the Attorney General took the lead on filing a multi-state amicus brief supporting LGBTQ+ workers and opposing the position that federal anti-discrimination laws do not protect against workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Advocating for More Resources to Protect Workers: In April 2019, Attorney General Raoul testified before a congressional committee on wage theft and the actions state attorneys general are taking to combat it. He urged Congress to give the U.S. Department of Labor the resources to help states enforce labor laws against employers who break the law.

Advocating for a Joint Employer Rule to Protect Workers: A critical area of the law focuses on the determination of who is considered an employer



During 2020, attorneys and staff reviewed more than 8,000 constituent complaints, called constituents to investigate their complaints, and contacted employers to push for adherence to all state and federal COVID-19 workplace safety guidelines.

for purposes of protecting the rights of workers. Unfortunately, schemes where workers perform work for the benefit of a primary company while employed on paper by a subcontractor erode the protections set forth in law to protect workers. The concept to determine whether an employee is actually employed by an employer is referred to as the “Joint Employment Rule.” The Office of the Attorney General has advocated for a more protective “Joint Employer Rule” on two fronts. On the federal level, the office joined a multistate multi-state suit challenging a U.S. Department of Labor rule on joint employment. The rule change departed from decades of Supreme Court precedent that protects workers and will increase the instances of misclassification, wage theft and fissuring of the workplace. Workers who earn hourly wages—and who would be most adversely affected by the rule—are also those most likely to suffer the adverse economic impacts caused by COVID-19, such as having hours reduced or being laid off.

On the state level, the office submitted a letter in support of the Illinois Department of Labor’s proposed joint employer and also testified at the Department’s public hearing on the proposal. This state rulemaking codifies a standard for determining when employer is responsible to cover workplace protections for the workers under its direction and control.

Fighting Federal Attacks on Illinois Workers: The Office of the Attorney General has also opposed several actions the federal government has taken to weaken laws that protect workers and ensure they are compensated for the work they perform.

- The office joined a multi-state lawsuit to stop the federal government from weakening requirements that employers report workplace illnesses and injuries.
- Along with other state attorneys general, the office urged the U.S. Department of Labor not to strip overtime protections from 8 million workers.
- The office also opposed a federal rule that would allow federal contractors to discriminate based on religious or moral beliefs.
- Attorney General Raoul and other state attorneys general challenged in court a federal rule making it harder for workers to have their union dues collected from their paychecks.

COVID-19 Workplace Safety: In March 2020, the Attorney General's office launched a phone hotline and email inbox for constituents with COVID-19 related workplace safety concerns. During 2020, attorneys and staff reviewed more than 8,000 constituent complaints, called constituents to investigate their complaints, and contacted employers to push for adherence to all state and federal COVID-19 workplace safety guidelines. Office attorneys also strategically collaborated with local health departments and other agencies for further investigation and enforcement.

Educating the Public About Labor Laws: Given the importance of informing the public about workers' rights, the Attorney General's office has developed informational "Know Your Rights" materials for publication and translated the documents into Spanish. The guide "Know Your Workplace Rights" includes information about minimum wage, the right to overtime pay, and example of common wage violations. The publication "Employment Rights of Construction Workers" summarizes laws that are relevant to the industry, including prevailing wage requirements and picketing rights.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS & REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Attorney General Raoul proudly carries on the fight for gender equality and protecting a woman's right to choose. Critical to this mission is ensuring that access to health care means protecting a woman's right to comprehensive care, including reproductive health services. The Office of the Attorney General safeguards reproductive health care rights within Illinois and has opposed threats to those rights from the federal government.

Equal Rights Amendment: Attorney General Raoul, together with the attorneys general of Virginia and Nevada, sought a writ of mandamus compelling the National Archivist to recognize the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) as the 28th Amendment to the United States Constitution. The ERA guarantees equal rights for all Americans regardless of their sex. This lawsuit follows Illinois' ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in 2018 and Virginia's ratification vote in 2020, passing the constitutional threshold of 38 states required for the ERA to become the 28th Amendment. The office's briefing on dispositive motions was supported by 11 amicus briefs representing a broad spectrum of women's and civil rights groups, international human rights organizations, 22 other states, and more than a hundred businesses who support equality. In March 2021, a district court judge in the District of Columbia granted the motion to dismiss filed by



AG Raoul and the Attorneys General of Virginia and Nevada called on the federal administration to formally recognize the ERA as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution.

the prior administration's Department of Justice, finding that the states lack standing to sue in court. Attorney General Raoul will continue to fight for the explicit prohibition of all forms of discrimination based on sex.

Fighting the Title X Gag Rule: Title X is a federal grant program that funds comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services, predominantly for low-income, under-insured, and uninsured people. In 2019, a new rule (the "gag rule") went into effect that restricts access to critical preventive reproductive health care by prohibiting doctors from providing referrals for abortion or offering complete information to patients about their family planning options. Physical and financial separation of any Title X recipient from facilities that provide abortions is also required. The rule has forced Planned Parenthood out of Title X, cutting the nation's network of Title X providers in half.

The Attorney General's office has fought the gag rule every step of the way, including most recently joining a coalition of 22 attorneys general in filing a petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit's decision to uphold the rule. The current federal administration is currently examining whether to suspend, revise, or rescind the rule.

Defending Access to Comprehensive Reproductive Healthcare: In a victory for a multi-state coalition of attorneys general including Illinois, a federal court struck down a health care rule that could have allowed providers to refuse health care for women, transgender people, and other Illinois residents. The Attorney General's office, in cooperation with other states, additionally challenged the federal government's attempt to expand exemptions to the Affordable Care Act's contraception mandate based on religious or moral objections. The Attorney General also signed onto a letter to Department of Health and Human Services urging the agency to comply with a nationwide injunction to enforce the mandate as written, instead of granting religious exemptions. The office filed an amicus brief supporting Planned Parenthood's lawsuit against the U.S. Department for Health and Human Services for shifting funding from evidence-based sex education to abstinence-only programs.



Amicus Briefs Challenging State Abortion Restrictions: The Attorney General's office co-led several reproductive rights amicus briefs supporting challenges to Missouri and Tennessee laws that unconstitutionally limit abortion access. When neighboring states enact unconstitutional abortion

restrictions, more patients cross the Illinois border to seek needed reproductive care.

Protecting the Illinois Reproductive Health Act: The Attorney General's office is leading the fight to protect the Reproductive Health Act, which ensures that health insurance companies cover reproductive health services in Illinois. The Attorney General supported the legislature's passage of the law in 2019, and now it is under attack in state court litigation, where attorneys from the office's Special Litigation Bureau are defending it.

MILITARY AND VETERANS' RIGHTS

The Attorney General's Military and Veterans Rights Bureau is dedicated to ensuring that veterans and active-duty military service members receive the benefits they have earned. The bureau handles a wide variety of financial and legal concerns affecting the military community, such as consumer fraud, scams connected with benefit assistance, military employment rights and housing issues.

ISERRA protects workers while performing military service:

The Illinois Service Member Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (ISERRA) protects the employment and benefits of service members who leave their civilian employment to serve our Nation or state. To protect the common public interest in military service, the role of the Attorney General's ISERRA Advocate is to promote awareness and ensure compliance with ISERRA by providing information, training, advocacy, and enforcement. The Advocate answers questions from employers in addition to assisting service members with complaints. **Since 2019, the office has secured more than \$277,107.56 in benefits for veterans, service members, and their dependents including over \$224,920.60 in compensation and benefits under ISERRA.**

Veteran Service Organizations 48 Hour Rule: Attorney General Kwame Raoul co-led a bipartisan coalition of 42 attorneys general urging the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to rescind a newly implemented policy that will result in further delays and confusion in the claims process. For decades, the VA has given accredited veterans service organizations (VSOs) a 48-hour period to review claims decisions prior to the department issuing its final determination. According to the VA, review by VSOs helps identify any errors or issues that may require clarification or additional discussion prior to the claim being promulgated. However, in April, the VA announced the VSO review process would be rescinded, meaning that any corrections or clarifications must be made after a final determination on a claim has been issued.



[View Brochure](#)

PROTECTING OUR ELECTIONS



[View Illinois Voters Guide](#)

Election Guide for Voters: The Office of the Attorney General developed and published guidance for Illinois voters for the 2020 General Election. This guidance was a necessary resource for voters, as the 2020 General Election was conducted under new statutory provisions designed to protect voters during the COVID-19 pandemic. This resource, “Guidance for Illinois Voters: 2020 Election,” was created as an easy-to-navigate summary of important information for voters to develop a voting plan, such as contact information for reliable sources for official election information, information about mail-in voting and in-person voting, and specific precautions related to COVID-19 and voting. This resource also was made available in Spanish and is accessible for individuals with impaired vision.

Election Day Monitoring: For the elections held in 2019 and 2020, the Office of the Attorney General engaged in Election Day monitoring in order to protect voters’ rights and ensure that polling places are accessible. The office dispatched teams of assistant attorneys general and investigators across Illinois to monitor both the primary and general elections. On election days, the office also maintains two hotlines, one for Chicago and Northern Illinois and the other for Central and Southern Illinois, which voters and others can call to report suspected improper or illegal activity.

Vote by Mail: Attorney General Raoul joined 13 states in successfully stopping sweeping changes to the U.S. Postal Service delivery process, including requirements to leave mail behind, no longer treat election mail as first-class mail, and remove mail-sorting machines. The proposed changes threatened the reliability and timeliness of mail delivery in a year in which more Americans than ever would be voting by mail because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ADVOCATING FOR OLDER RESIDENTS



Attorney General Raoul at the Bloom Township senior picnic in August 2019.

Attorney General Raoul works to protect all Illinois seniors by providing assistance with fraud, scams, and financial exploitation and by taking legal action against those who prey on seniors.

Senior Helpline: The Attorney General’s office hosts the Senior Consumer Fraud Hotline, which gives seniors and concerned individuals an opportunity to report their concerns about fraud, scams, as well as elder abuse and financial exploitation. **The helpline**

responds to and provides advocacy to an average of 150 to 200 callers a month. The senior helpline also develops and sends mailings to alerts seniors on trending and ongoing scams and fraud that target seniors.

Elderly Service Officer Training: The Attorney General's office holds Elderly Service Officer trainings for law enforcement every year. This intensive training program is designed for law enforcement to designate a police officer to be trained on how to reduce criminal victimization and provide support for older residents. The training developed by the office includes a wide range of topics, including considerations for working with seniors as they age, common consumer scams, and the neurobiology of trauma. The training also includes speakers from the Department on Aging, local law enforcement, local prosecutor's office, State Public Guardian, elder law attorneys, AARP, the Secretary of State's Office, the Illinois State Police's Silver Search Program, and Illinois TRIAD, a partnership between community organizations, seniors and law enforcement on senior issues.

Elderly Service Officer of the Year: As part of the office's participation in the annual TRIAD Conference, Attorney General recognizes and awards "Elderly Service Officers of the Year." This recognition is awarded to those Elderly Service Officers who are nominated by their colleagues who have shown dedication to serving the senior population in Illinois.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities are entitled as a matter of law to fair and equal opportunities in all aspects of society. The Disability Rights Bureau enforces state and federal laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities in Illinois. In addition, the Disability Rights Bureau provides technical assistance and referrals to individuals with disabilities, public and private entities seeking to comply with disability rights laws, and advocates for state and federal policies that impact the interests of individuals with disabilities.

Enforcement of Disability Rights Laws: In 2019 and 2020, the Disability Rights Bureau received 450 complaints alleging violations of state and federal disability rights laws and initiated 214 new investigations. **At the conclusion of 2020, the bureau was managing a total of 326 open investigations into violations of state and federal disability rights laws.**

Educating the Public on Compliance with Disabilities Rights Laws: The bureau operates two Technical Assistance Helplines. Bureau staff in both the Chicago and Springfield offices field questions from individuals with disabilities, code officials, architects, business owners, school districts, community groups, advocacy agencies, employers, and others regarding

their rights and responsibilities under local, state, and federal laws. In 2019, the Disability Rights Bureau responded to 1,081 technical assistance calls. In 2020, the bureau responded to almost 1,000 constituents' inquiries by either telephone, email, or individually tailored letters providing education and assistance.

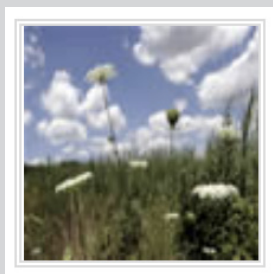
First Annual Disability Rights Bureau Report: The Office of the Attorney General worked with Senator Dan McConchie on legislation that was signed into law as Public Act 101-537, which created an annual public report on the bureau's enforcement efforts under the Environmental Barriers Act. The first [annual report](#), issued in 2020, also includes other enforcement actions taken by the bureau, in addition to educational presentations, community involvement, and assistance given to constituents in furtherance of the bureau's mission to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities.

Subminimum Wage Phase Out: The Attorney General's office led a multi-state coalition urging Congress to pass legislation phasing out the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities. The subminimum wage program, which was enacted in 1938, represents an antiquated approach to disability rights that is inconsistent with the spirit of key civil rights laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Autism CARES Act: Attorney General Raoul joined a coalition of state Attorneys General to successfully advocate for the reauthorization of the Autism CARES Act. Autism spectrum disorder impacts hundreds of thousands of Americans, and the number of individuals diagnosed annually continues to rise. The Act funds and coordinates federal interagency efforts supporting research, prevalence tracking, screening, and professional training. The Autism CARES Act of 2019 broadens the Act's coverage to include individuals with other developmental disabilities; emphasizes research on services and supports across the lifespan; expands the entities eligible for grants to include Indian Tribes; and prioritizes professional training programs in urban or rural underserved areas. The reauthorization and expansion of this critical legislation helps ensure that individuals living with autism spectrum disorder, and other developmental disabilities, receive the support and research necessary to address this national concern.

Fighting Discrimination in the Blood Plasma Industry: In June 2020, to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities, the Disability Rights Bureau filed suit against CSL Plasma, Inc., one of the largest plasma collection and processing companies in the world. CSL Plasma claims that the Americans with Disabilities and the Illinois Human Rights Act do not apply to the company, and as a result maintain policies that deny thousands of Illinois residents the opportunity to supplement their incomes by donating plasma. This litigation is still pending.

In this Section:



Preserving the Environment

- Environmental Enforcement
- By the Numbers
- Environmental Justice
- Legislative Advocacy
- Environmental Crimes
- Multi-state Actions
- Agriculture

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Representing the State
- Advocacy in the Legislature
- Contact Information



Preserving the Environment

Attorney General Raoul is committed to safeguarding the environment for use and enjoyment by all Illinois residents and for future generations. The Environmental Enforcement Division, along with the Environmental Crimes Bureau, enforces the state's environmental laws through the filing of civil actions or bringing criminal charges against those who pollute and cause harm to residents' health and some of the state's greatest resources. These efforts hold polluters responsible for their actions and ensure remediation of affected areas.



Carlyle Lake at Eldon Hazlet State Park Illinois

Preserving the Environment by the Numbers:

In 2019 and 2020, the Environmental Enforcement Division:



Filed 163 complaints alleging violations of Illinois' environmental protection laws and regulations.



Reached settlements in 129 enforcement cases.



Collected \$4,810,964.53 in civil penalties.



Required the expenditure of \$48,353,212.09 to comply with Illinois' environmental protection laws and regulations.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

Hazardous Waste Spill: Within days of an accident in which a semitrailer spilled hazardous electric arc furnace dust on a public road in the Downstate village of Hamel, the Attorney General's office filed a lawsuit against PDC Services, Inc., the company which owned the semitrailer involved in the accident. **A court order is now in place requiring the company to fully investigate and clean up all resulting contamination.**

Safe Drinking Water: Water in University Park, a community in the south suburbs of Chicago, contained elevated levels of lead after the supplier, Aqua Illinois, used an additive that allowed lead from pipes to leach into the water. **The Attorney General's office sued, then secured an emergency order that makes sure residents have access to filters and bottled water while the case is pending and work is ongoing to fix the problem.**

Release of Chemicals from Factory Explosion: Following a catastrophic industrial explosion in Waukegan that killed four workers and released chemicals into the surrounding environment, the office filed suit against AB Specialty Silicones, LLC, a silicone chemical manufacturer and distributor. An emergency order now in place requires AB to remediate the contamination.

Limited the use of Ethylene Oxide: The office successfully defended against Willowbrook-based Sterigenics' challenge to the order that shut down its operations, then obtained a consent order preventing it from reopening without complying with strict new standards limiting the emission of carcinogenic ethylene oxide (EtO).

Ultimately, the plant chose to remain shuttered. Attorney General Raoul also has urged the federal U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to set stricter limits on EtO and advocated for the Food and Drug Administration to approve safer alternatives for sterilizing medical equipment.

Combating Climate Change and Supporting Renewable Energy: The Attorney General's office, as a part of a coalition of 28 states and cities filed a court challenge the U.S. EPA's so-called Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule, which replaced the Clean Power Plan with a watered-down regulation that ignored the science of climate change and attempted to reverse advances in clean, affordable and renewable energy. **In a win for the Attorney General's coalition, the U.S. Court of the Appeals for the D.C. Circuit vacated the ACE rule and remanded the matter to the U.S. EPA on January 20, 2021.**

Challenge to U.S. EPA Ozone Designation: After U.S. EPA ignored

air quality data and designated areas in southeast Wisconsin, northwest Indiana, and McHenry and Monroe counties in Illinois as meeting national ambient air quality standards for ozone in 2018, the Attorney General, together with the City of Chicago and several environmental groups, challenged the designations in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit as arbitrary, capricious and an abuse of discretion. The Court ruled in the coalition's favor and remanded the designations back to U.S. EPA for further consideration.

Protecting the Public from PFAS: Attorney General Raoul also fought to protect public health through addressing per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) pollution. PFAS has been shown to cause developmental defects, kidney cancer and liver damage, and harms the thyroid and immune system. The office joined a coalition of attorneys general urging Congress to include protections in the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act. In particular, the coalition called on Congress to address contamination associated with defense installations: PFAS contamination in groundwater and surface water has been identified in and near military installations. Many protections were ultimately included in the legislation and the U.S. EPA has further committed to regulating PFAS. Furthermore, the office has been monitoring a PFAS rulemaking in development by the Illinois EPA.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Air Pollution Caused by Demolition: The Attorney General's office filed an air pollution lawsuit against the site owners and demolition contractors for air pollution violations, after contractors imploded a concrete smokestack at the former Crawford Generating Station in Chicago. The demolition caused the smokestack to crash to the ground and created a large plume of dirt and particulate matter that drifted into the adjacent Little Village neighborhood of Chicago. **In settlement of the lawsuit, the companies funded a \$370,000 grant that will allow the largest federally qualified health center to initiate a Health and Wellness Program at its three clinics in Little Village.**

Lead and Copper Rule: Attorney General Raoul joined 10 other states in filing comments urging improvements to the U.S. EPA's proposed amendments to the Lead and Copper Rule, which are nationwide standards for controlling and remediating lead in drinking water. Although some of the proposed revisions strengthened the rule, others appeared to weaken existing requirements and fail to adequately protect the public from lead in drinking water.



Lead is a highly toxic heavy metal that can adversely affect almost every organ and bodily system. Lead exposure can cause a range of health problems, including premature birth, learning disabilities, delayed physical development for children, and cardiovascular and kidney problems for adults. It is particularly dangerous for children since their developing brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to its damaging effects. Lead most commonly is introduced to drinking water through the lead service lines that connect homes to public water mains and is exacerbated if the source water has high acidity or low mineral content. Lead also can come from faucets and other plumbing inside the home.

Attorney General Raoul also highlighted how the rule fell short in evaluating and addressing the impacts of lead in drinking water for disadvantaged communities or those that have been designated as areas of environmental justice concern. Communities in Illinois with a percentage of under-served and/or minority residents that is greater than twice the statewide average can be designated as areas of environmental justice concern by the Illinois EPA. These communities are most affected by lead in drinking water and are less able to pay to fix the problem.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Cracking Down on Coal Ash Pollution: As a result of improper storage and disposal, coal ash, a byproduct from coal-fired power plants, threatens to contaminate waterways throughout Illinois. Senate Bill 9, sponsored by Senator Scott Bennett and Representative Carol Ammons, establishes stricter standards for the safe storage and disposal of Coal Ash. The Office of the Attorney General reviewed, commented on, and supported this important state law. (Public Act 101-0171). The office continues to help shape this law through its participation in the rulemaking process.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES

Illegal Fish Importation: Allied Aqua, Inc. imported fish species into Illinois on multiple occasions despite regulations prohibiting such action without a state permit. The office entered into a deferred prosecution agreement that required confirmation of the cessation of the company's operations, in addition to \$8,000 in installment payments.

Flying Squirrels: The office coordinated with the Illinois Conservation Police in investigating a Florida resident who was suspected of trapping and smuggling flying squirrels (a rare and valued species in Asia) in Florida and driving them to Chicago for shipment to Asia through O'Hare airport. The man has been arrested in Florida and faces charges by authorities of that state which expose him to a 30-year prison term; six of his accomplices in

Florida and Georgia have also been charged. The public is reminded that all charged defendants are presumed innocent until proven otherwise in a court of law.

MULTI-STATE ACTIONS

Civil Enforcement of Federal Environmental Laws: Attorney General Raoul along with 13 attorneys general, submitted a letter to the U.S. EPA denouncing its March 26 memorandum that announced a nationwide policy limiting the civil enforcement of federal environmental laws during the COVID-19 crisis. The coalition expressed concern that the U.S. EPA's policy significantly curtailed enforcement of the nation's bedrock environmental and public health laws. The coalition argued that without any requirement to provide the U.S. EPA, states, tribes, or the public with notice of such noncompliance, fence line communities, often under-served and minority communities, could be exposed to harmful pollution without adequate warning. The policy also ignores the connection between air pollution and cardiovascular and respiratory conditions which may increase risk of serious harms, including premature death, for individuals who contract the COVID-19 virus. The temporary enforcement policy ended on August 31, 2020.

Protecting Endangered Species: Attorney General Raoul joined a multi-state coalition to sue the federal government over a rollback of environmental protections for endangered species. In August 2019, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service adopted several changes to rules that apply to provisions of the Endangered Species Act. Among the many rollbacks that reduce protections for wildlife, the rules, for the first time, require agencies to consider the economic impacts of whether to list an endangered species. This change injects economic considerations into the Endangered Species Act's science-driven, species-focused analyses. This regulatory change contravenes statutory language and Supreme Court precedent that require analysis to be done solely on the basis of science for the purpose of halting species extinction, whatever the cost. More than 30 species listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act reside in Illinois, including the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) and the Illinois cave amphipod (*Gammarus acherondytes*), a small crustacean that is endemic to cave systems in Monroe and St. Clair counties.



AGRICULTURE



One of the great resources in Illinois is its agricultural industry. The Attorney General's office represents the Illinois Department of Agriculture in court and also serves as the Secretary of the Illinois Grain Insurance Corporation, which protects the interests of Illinois farmers.

Protecting Farmworkers from Pesticide Poisoning:

In December 2020, the Attorney General's office joined a multi-state coalition challenging an EPA rollback of the "Worker Protection Standard" that protects farmworkers and others from toxic pesticides. Among other removed protections, the rollback rule allows for spraying of pesticides even if the harmful chemicals could drift off-site and harm individuals near the farm's boundaries. In a related case brought by nonprofit organizations, the Court granted a temporary injunction preventing the rule from going into place. The case currently is stayed pending a status update from the current federal administration.

Addressing Agricultural Pollution: After a concentrated animal feeding operation in Iroquois County released livestock waste that killed thousands of fish and mussels in a nearby waterway, the Attorney General's office filed a lawsuit against the facility's owners and operators. **A settlement of the suit required the defendants to pay \$26,000 in civil penalties and \$200,000 to compensate for the loss of aquatic life and fund restoration efforts.**

Providing Resources at the Illinois and DuQuoin State Fairs: The Office of the Attorney General participates in the Illinois State Fair and the DuQuoin State Fair by hosting a tent containing information and resources for attendees of the state's premier agricultural events. In 2019, the theme



The office developed interactive displays for the Attorney General's tent at the 2019 Illinois State Fair.

of Attorney General Raoul's tent was "Preventing Home Repair Fraud," a common consumer complaint, which also was unfortunately relevant in 2019 after unprecedented flooding in downstate Illinois counties brought out scammers who try to pressure homeowners to signing on to costly home repairs following storms. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Illinois and DuQuoin State Fairs were cancelled. The office looks forward to participating in the fairs in the summer of 2021.

In this Section:



Representing the State

- Government Representation
- Civil Appeals
- Criminal Appeals

Jump To:

- Protecting Consumers
- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
- Advocacy in the Legislature
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Representing the State

The Government Representation Division of the Office of the Attorney General provides legal representation for the state and all state officers, boards, commissions, agencies, and employees in civil litigation involving their official capacity. The Solicitor General oversees the Appellate Division of the office, which represent the people and the state in both federal and state appellate courts.

Representing the State by the Numbers:



In 2019 and 2020, the Civil Appeals Division opened 707 cases.



In 2019 and 2020, the Criminal Appeals Division opened 899 cases.



The office took the lead on seven multi-state amicus briefs in the appellate courts in 2019 and took the lead on 13 multi-state amicus briefs in 2020.



In 2020, Civil and Criminal Appeals filed more than 550 appellate briefs and substantive memos and presented oral argument in more than 100 cases either online or in person.

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION



In 2019 and 2020, the office as a whole collected a total of almost \$1.9 billion on behalf of the state.

The Government Representation Division handles thousands of case referrals each year. In 2019, the Division received 10,349 referrals. **In 2020, the Division received 8,894 referrals for a total of 32,524 pending cases.**

Collecting Money for the State of Illinois: The Government Representation Division collects money for the state for damage to state property, revenue collection, subrogation cases, wage claim cases, fines and penalties, unemployment insurance and the administration of Illinois estate taxes. In 2019, the Government Representation Division collected \$438,227,567.25 on behalf of the state. In 2020, the division collected \$280,141,760.01 on behalf of the state. Looking at all divisions and bureaus, the office collected \$991,887,791 on behalf of the state in 2019 and \$904,146,530 in 2020.

Collecting from Alleged Labor Law Violators: On behalf of the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL), the office is pursuing unpaid wages and penalties on behalf of 93 former employees in the total amount of \$859,297.31. These matters were referred to the Attorney General's office Pursuant to Executive Order 2019-02, which requires IDOL to refer the Attorney General's office all pending wage claim cases involving egregious and repeated violations of the law.

In a separate action, IDOL is seeking \$352,577.09 in wages plus penalties for defendant Illinois Central Sweeping, LLC's alleged violation of the Prevailing Wage Act. This case involves 28 job projects and more than 50 claimants. Both cases are currently pending.

Expunging Cannabis Records and Creating Equity: Following Governor Pritzker's order pardoning 11,017 low-level cannabis offenses on December 31, 2019, the Illinois Attorney General's office petitioned the courts in 91 Illinois counties to expunge the related arrest and conviction records on behalf of the Prisoner Review Board. Expungement of past cannabis offenses creates equity as adult-use cannabis is no longer illegal under state law.

CIVIL APPEALS



The Civil Appeals Division of the Attorney General's office represents the State of Illinois and state officers, employees, boards, commissions, and agencies in state and federal reviewing courts, including the Illinois Supreme Court and United States Supreme Court. The division handles appeals presenting issues of state and federal constitutional law, tax law, environmental law, labor and employment law, administrative law, prison operations, child welfare and support, state benefits, public access to information, and professional and other licensing.

Successfully Defended the Constitutionality of the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act: Culp v. Raoul

United States Supreme Court, No. 17-2998; petition for certiorari denied 6/15/2020

The plaintiffs were a group of nonresidents who held concealed carry licenses in their home states and Second Amendment interest groups with nonresident members in similar circumstances. They wished to apply for a concealed carry license in Illinois, but were unable to do so under Illinois law, which restricts concealed carry licensure to Illinois residents and to residents of other states with firearms laws similar to Illinois's, which did not include the plaintiffs' states. The plaintiffs filed suit alleging that Illinois's Firearm Concealed Carry Act and its corresponding administrative rules were unconstitutional. The United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit ruled against the plaintiffs, concluding that the statute and rules were substantially related to Illinois's important public-safety interest in ensuring that those with adverse criminal and mental health history do not publicly carry firearms in Illinois. The United States Supreme Court denied certiorari, preserving the lower court's ruling.

CRIMINAL APPEALS

The Criminal Appeals Division of the Attorney General's office represents the People of the State of Illinois in the state and federal courts of appeal in criminal and quasi-criminal matters. The division is the sole office responsible for briefing and arguing appeals to the Illinois Supreme Court in criminal cases. The division also handles the habeas docket for the State of Illinois in the federal district courts and the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, as well as direct appeals in prosecutions handled by our office. **In addition, the division assists the state's attorneys from Illinois' 102 counties with constitutional challenges to state criminal statutes that arise in their cases.** These cases often involve constitutional questions and issues about how criminal statutes are to be interpreted.

Successfully Defended the Constitutionality of Illinois's Strongest in the Nation "Revenge Porn" Statute: People v. Bethany Austin

United States Supreme Court, No. 19-1029; petition for certiorari denied 10/5/2020

Illinois' "revenge porn" statute makes it a crime to disseminate private sexual images under circumstances where the offender knew or should have known that the images were intended to remain private and the victim did not consent to the dissemination. Although the circuit court had held that the statute violates the First Amendment, the Illinois Supreme Court



The Court concluded by noting that this provision is regarded as the strongest anti-revenge-porn legislation in the country and that it has been proposed as a model for federal legislation targeting the same problem.

reversed that decision on appeal: applying intermediate scrutiny, the Court held that the statute is constitutional because it did not burden substantially more speech than necessary. It also rejected two other constitutional challenges to the statute, holding that it was neither overbroad nor unconstitutionally vague. The Court concluded by noting that this provision is regarded as the strongest anti-revenge-porn legislation in the country and that it has been proposed as a model for federal legislation targeting the same problem. The United States Supreme Court denied certiorari, ensuring that the decision would not be disturbed.

In this Section:



Advocacy in the Legislature

- 2019 Legislative Session
- 2020 Legislative Session

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- Government Transparency & Accountability
- Safeguarding our Children
- Violence Prevention and Crime Victim Services
- Building Strategic Partnerships
- Keeping Illinois Healthy
- Keeping Communities Safe
- Advocating for Your Rights
- Preserving the Environment
- Representing the State
- Contact Information



Advocacy in the Legislature

Besides protecting the public interest through litigation, the Office of the Attorney General also plays an important role in advocacy before the Illinois General Assembly. During legislative session, the office's legislative team, with assistance from staff and attorneys throughout the office, draft, negotiate, and support bills that strengthen existing laws or create new law to promote the public interest. **In 2019, the legislative team reviewed more than 6,000 pieces of legislation filed in the Illinois General Assembly. The office's staff and attorneys analyzed more than 450 of these pieces of legislation.** In 2020, the legislative team reviewed more than 3,000 legislative items filed in the Illinois General Assembly. The office's staff and attorneys analyzed more than 430 of these bills. The following bill numbers were assigned in the 101st General Assembly, unless otherwise noted.



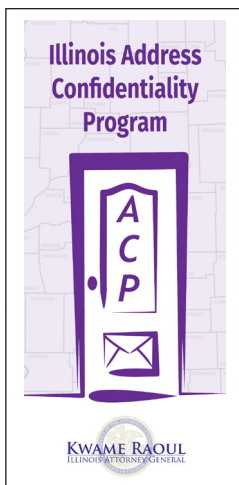
Legislative Affairs Chief Ashley Wright and the Attorney General discuss legislative initiatives.

2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SB 651 – Protecting Consumers from Overpaying on their Utility Bills:

During the 2019 Legislative Session, the office successfully advocated for the passage of Senate Bill 651, the Home Energy Affordability and Transparency or “HEAT” Act. This legislation protects consumers against the unlawful and deceptive marketing practices of alternative retail electric and gas suppliers by requiring disclosures to consumers and giving the Office of the Attorney General explicit authority to pursue companies that pressure consumers to changing their utility provider, a change that often results in consumers paying more in utility bills. The HEAT Act was sponsored by Senator Kimberly Lightford and Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth and signed into law by Governor Pritzker (Public Act 101-0590).

SB 161 – Enhanced Authority to Protect Illinois Workers: Senate Bill 161, sponsored by Senator John Curran and Representative Jay Hoffman, protects Illinois workers from wage theft and other unlawful employment practices by giving express statutory authority for the creation of a Worker Protection Unit within the office that will enforce violations of worker protection laws. SB 161 also gives the bureau the legal authority to enforce the state's wage and labor laws and creates a task force composed of state and local leaders in order to facilitate intergovernmental cooperation to pursue those bad actors. While a previous version of this legislation was vetoed by a prior Governor, this legislation passed with bipartisan support and was signed into law by Governor Pritzker. (Public Act 101-0527).



[View ACP Brochure](#)

HB 2818 – Enhancing the Illinois Address Confidentiality

Program: House Bill 2818, sponsored by Representative Terra Costa Howard and Senator Suzy Glowiak Hilton, expands the Address Confidentiality for Victims of Domestic Violence Act to apply its protections to victims of sexual assault and stalking. The Act authorizes the Attorney General to create a program that allows victims to apply for a substitute address that can be used to create or update public records or personal use. Additionally, the program functions as a mail-forwarding system for all first-class mail. While the original legislation only allowed victims of domestic violence to utilize the program, HB 2818 allows victims of sexual assault and stalking to apply to the program starting January 1, 2021. (Public Act 101-0270).

SB 9 – Cracking Down on Coal Ash Pollution: As a result of improper storage and disposal, coal ash, a byproduct from coal-fired power plants, threatens to contaminate waterways throughout Illinois. Senate Bill 9, sponsored by Senator Scott Bennett and Representative Carol Ammons, establishes stricter standards for the safe storage and disposal of coal ash. The Office of the Attorney General reviewed, commented on, and supported this important state law. (Public Act 101-0171)

2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The following legislative measures were a part of the office’s 2020 legislative agenda. Because of the abbreviated legislative session due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these bills did not advance in the General Assembly. However, the office refiled these initiatives in the 2021 spring session.

HB 5320/SB 3571 – Regulation of Student Loan Debt Relief Companies:

House Bill 5320, sponsored by Representative Michael Zalewski, and Senate Bill 3571, sponsored by Senator Omar Aquino, will regulate Student Loan Debt Relief Companies (SLDR’s), which are entities that provide “debt relief services” to students, but routinely use high-pressure sales tactics and charge high, upfront fees for their services, all when students may utilize the free debt relief services offered by the U.S. Department of Education. The Office of the Attorney General receives many complaints from students about the deceptive practices of SLDRs and has filed nine lawsuits against these entities. SLDRs are not currently subject to any licensure requirement in Illinois. HB 5320/SB 3571 amend the Debt Settlement Act to expressly regulate SLDRs by including these entities and the services they provide under the regulatory authority of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. Additionally, the legislation requires SLDRs to make specific disclosures in their advertising and communications with consumers. This bill was refiled by Senator Aquino and Representative

Zalewski in the 2021 session as Senate Bill 669, which passed the General Assembly with bipartisan support and awaits the Governor's consideration.

HB 5243/SB 3700 – Helping Crime Victims Receive Compensation:

House Bill 5243, sponsored by Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth, and Senate Bill 3700, sponsored by Senator Jacqueline Collins make several updates to the Illinois Crime Victim Compensation Program with the goal of both streamlining the administration of benefits to victims of crime and also ensuring that benefits under the program are sufficient to cover the losses of all persons who have unfortunately been impacted by crime. Established in 1973, the office administers the program in conjunction with the Court of Claims to distribute federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds to eligible recipients with the goal of helping to reduce the financial burden imposed on victims of violent crime and their families. HB 5243/SB 3700 make several changes to the Program, such as extending the statute of limitations for filing for compensation, implementing a victim-centered approach to awarding compensation, and making the review process more efficient. Many parts of this legislation were included in the Criminal Justice omnibus legislation initiated by the Legislative Black Caucus and passed during the final days of the 101st General Assembly, which was signed into law by the Governor as Public Act 101-0652.



The Attorney General invited all members of the General Assembly to an open house at the Springfield Office. AG Raoul is pictured here with Sen. Jacqueline Collins.

SB 3699 – Protecting Youth from the Dangers of Vaping:

Senate Bill 3699, sponsored by Senator Julie Morrison, is comprehensive legislation intended to address the vaping crisis in Illinois. The legislation addresses many regulatory aspects of vaping, including restrictions on packaging, mandated safety warnings, prohibitions on the sale of certain dangerous additives, requiring any person or business shipping electronic cigarettes to be licensed by the Illinois Department of Revenue, and for those shippers to take steps to ensure that the purchaser of electronic cigarettes is at least 21 years old. This bill was refiled by Senator Morrison and Representative Morgan in the 2021 session as Senate Bill 512, which passed the General Assembly with bipartisan support and awaits the Governor's consideration.



AG Raoul is pictured here with Dr. Ngozi Ezike.

HB 5361/SB 3844 – “Know Before You Owe” Private Loan Education

Act: House Bill 5361, sponsored by Representative Lamont Robinson, and Senate Bill 3844, sponsored by former Senator Pat McGuire are aimed at

promoting awareness among students of their federal loan eligibility and equipping borrowers with meaningful information so that they can make educated decisions about how to responsibly finance their education.

The legislation creates the “Know Before You Owe” Private Loan Education Act of 2020, which will prohibit financial aid offices at institutions of higher learning from directing borrowers to take out private loans if the student borrower has remaining federal loan eligibility. It also requires private lenders to seek a certification from the school confirming that the student borrower does not have any further federal loan eligibility. This bill was refiled by Representative Stuart and Senator Bennett in the 2021 session as House Bill 2746, which passed the General Assembly with bipartisan support and awaits the Governor’s consideration.

Office of the Illinois Attorney General



*File a consumer complaint or learn how
to prevent consumer fraud at*

www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov



*The Attorney General is the state's
chief legal officer and is responsible
for protecting the public interest
of the state and its people.*


KWAME RAOUL
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL

Consumer Fraud Hotlines

1-800-386-5438 (Chicago)
1-800-243-0618 (Springfield)
1-800-243-0607 (Carbondale)

Toll-Free TTY Numbers

1-800-964-3013 (Chicago)
1-877-844-5461 (Springfield)

Línea Gratuita en Español

1-866-310-8398

Homeowner Helpline

1-866-544-7151 (Voice/TTY)
312-814-5094

Crime Victims Assistance Line

1-800-228-3368

Civil Rights Hotline

1-877-581-3692

Disability Rights Hotline

312-814-5684 (Chicago)
217-524-2660 (Springfield)

Health Care Hotline

1-877-305-5145

Identity Theft Hotline

1-866-999-5630

Senior Citizen Consumer Fraud Hotline

1-800-243-5377

Student Loan Helpline

1-800-455-2456

Workplace Rights

1-844-740-5076

Military & Veterans Rights Hotline

1-800-382-3000

Main Offices



**500 South Second Street
Springfield, IL 62706
(217) 782-1090
TTY: 1-877-844-5461**



**100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 814-3000
TTY: 1-800-964-3013**



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Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 529-6400/6401
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